Dragon Wars™

Interplay™

We're very proud to present Interplay's third game in a line of quality products. Getting it right on every game is very important to us. In fact, each new product we create takes 1 to 2 years to complete.

Our first game we released was entitled **Neuromancer**, where you assume the role of a computer hacker in a run-down, hi-tech city of the future. Neuromancer was received very well, winning numerous awards, such as "Best Adventure Game of the Year" from Computer Gaming World.

Our second release was a completely animated version of the ancient game of chess, appropriately entitled **Battle Chess**. Battle Chess was the most graphic product Interplay had done, and we were quite pleased when the SPA awarded Battle Chess the "Best Graphics Achievement" award for 1989.

We hope **Dragon Wars** brings you many hours of enjoyment.

Please write us at:

Interplay Productions
1575 Corporate Drive
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

Should you have any problems you can reach us at **(714) 549-2411**.

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Dragon Wars

Program:	"Burger" Bill Heineman
Designed by:	Paul Ryan O'Connor
	Brian Fargo
Artwork by:	Todd J. Camasta
Produced by:	Brian Fargo
Assistant Producer:	Bruce Schlickbernd
Music by:	Kurt Heiden
Cover art:	Boris Vallejo
Design Consultant:	Steve Peterson
Manual by:	Paul Ryan O'Connor
	Bill "Weezmonster" Dugan

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Dragon Wars

INTRODUCTION

Orbiting the star Sirius, millions of miles away from any other intelligent life, a tiny ball of hot water is home to amazing adventure. Sirius is three times the mass of our own star, and sixty times brighter; its huge bloated mass spans the entire horizon of the humid world of Oceana.

Oceana is a world 85% of water and getting wetter, as the baleful fury of Sirius erodes her diminutive polar ice caps year by year. Oceana is a world younger than our own, wedded to a star with but a fraction of the life expectancy of Sol. It is a world burning the candle at both ends, enjoying twice the light in half the time, and spinning all the faster toward annihilation and the Void.

Her surface is dotted with ten thousand islands. Some are home to thriving civilization, while others are all that remain of greater achievements long since sunk beneath the waves. Oceana is a violent world of capricious storms, where natural geographic barriers and hostile sea life hold people and empires apart. In no time of her history has Oceana known unified rule.

Of all the islands of Oceana, the most fabled by far is Dilmun, "The Land Where The Sun Sets". Located on a score of nautical charts, each time in a different place, Dilmun is always just over the horizon. It is the home to all that is best of Oceana—the home of her eldest empire; the seat of her finest culture; the lair of her most terrible beasts. It is an isle of dragons and a destination of pilgrims. Beneath Nisir, "The Mountain of Salvation", is the secret heart of Magan, the Underworld.

As your adventure begins, you find yourself aboard an armored pilgrim's barge, nosing through the still waters of a silent fjord, nearing the moment you will drop the plank on an isle you believe to be Dilmun. Perhaps you are a pilgrim in search of peace and enlightenment, or an adventurer on the trail of fabled treasure, or a weary mercenary seeking retirement and eternal slumber in vaults held high above the waves. Hopes are high as the incredibly ancient architecture of this isle's lone port swims into view. Rapture is just off the bow.

As it turns out, Purgatory is just off the bow...rapture may or may not lay beyond the walls of the port city. No sooner does the pilgrim's barge enter the harbor than she is boarded by city officials, who quickly put all crew and passengers under arrest. Stripped of all possessions and wealth, one pilgrim in every ten is separated from the pack for sacrifice to the Dragons. Your party is among the fortunate remainder dropped naked and defenseless into the slums of Purgatory, there to fare as you will. The armored barge is confiscated and made a part of Dilmun's rapidly growing navy—a navy that will one day sally out across the seas of Oceana, at long last bringing her beneath the heel of a single ruler: Namtar, the Beast From The Pit.

Back to basics in one of the most dangerous neighborhoods anywhere, you know only you've been had. A well-intentioned traveller, you've been treated like a beast by Namtar, and consigned to a life of perpetual poverty in Purgatory. No one escapes Purgatory alive, and few know the luxury to die in bed within her walls. Starting hip-deep in mud, you must use every trick just to stay alive, much less worry about sticking it to The Beast From The Pit.

OBJECTIVE

You and your party are adventurers in the magical land of Dilmun, an island of salvation perverted into a world of horror by Namtar. You begin the game armed only with your wits in the savage streets of Purgatory. You must find a way to survive in Oceana's most dangerous slum, locate a way out of the same, and accept the impossible task of toppling Namtar. Vengeance must be yours!

Examine your reference card to determine how your mundane computer becomes a portal to the mystic world of Oceana. The card will show you both how to boot up your game and what keys to press to execute game commands and summon various menus. Once the game is up and running, you'll find a party waiting to begin the adventure in the middle of the stinking city of Purgatory. We'd tell you to watch your purse—but you don't have one! Nor do you have a belt from which to hang a purse, or pants from which to hang a belt, or...you get the idea.

THE PARTY

A party can have up to four characters, plus up to three non-player characters. Non-player characters are summoned creatures or heroic individuals you may meet in your travels. Everyone else is one of your own people.

The game provides a beginning batch of characters for your use should you wish to jump directly into the adventure. All characters are able-bodied and have no brain damage—use them, or create your own. If you'd like to create your own characters, read the "Creating Characters" section.

It may also be possible to transfer characters from other computer games into DRAGON WARS — check the reference card for details. Be warned that such translation is inexact...characters arriving in this game from other "worlds" will find none of their magic objects and few of their spells make the journey with them.

CREATING CHARACTERS

When the game fires up, you'll see the names of the default characters displayed on the screen. If you want to create your own characters, you'll have to delete those already present to make room. Type the number of the character you want to delete and follow the screen prompts — when you open a space in the party, the computer will offer you the chance to create a new character.

There's also an option to rename the default characters, which allows you to personalize your party without having to create a whole new batch of heroes.

The process of character creation requires you to spend points to custom-design your character. You are provided fifty character points to spend on attributes and skills. Characters begin with a default value of ten in all attributes, and have no skills. By following the prompts, you can page through the character creation menus to modify attributes and purchase skills.

Character creation is an art, and you'll have to experiment if you want to arrive at the "perfect" design (if such a thing exists). To get you started in the right direction, consider the following design guidelines.

➨ No one character can do it all...nor should they. While everyone will benefit from weapon and magic skills, it helps if your characters specialize. It's better to have a character who is very good at something and useless in other fields than to have one who can do a little bit of everything.
➨ This is a game of slow character growth. Don't expect your characters to change very much, even if they earn vast amounts of experience.
➨ When buying skills for beginning characters, it is rarely wise to purchase more than one level. Situations requiring skill levels of two or higher are rare in the game, and you'll know them when you find them. If you find an instance where your skills are insufficient, you can always pursue another path, then return later when you've improved the relevant skill through experience.
➨ Finally, be aware that a character must master Low Magic before any other variety of magic can be learned.

CHARACTER PROFILE

See your reference card on how to view a character's profile. After a character is called up, you can perform a variety of functions, such as viewing statistics and managing your inventory of gold and items. As with character creation, just follow the prompts. A few minutes of hands-on experimenting will show you everything you need to know about the character profile.

Characters are represented by a series of words and numbers, the significance of which are illuminated below:

STRENGTH (**STR**): The most immediate effect of great strength is the ability to cause additional damage to foes. Strength is also useful for breaking things, lifting heavy objects, and opening stubborn pop bottles. High strength is required to use certain weapons; strength in excess of a what a weapon requires provides additional damage. Inquiring at a weapons shop will sometimes tell you the strength required to use certain weapons.

DEXTERITY (**DEX**): A high dexterity makes you light on your feet, improves your chance of hitting the bad guys, and diminishes the chance of getting nailed yourself. Dexterity also determines the order in which a character acts in combat, starting with the highest dexterity and moving down to the lowest. Consider designing some magic-users with low dexterity, so they can cast healing spells at the end of a combat round.

INTELLIGENCE (**INT**): Ultimately, your characters are only as intelligent as are you. This statistic measures a character's abstract intelligence; it is important for learning spells and solving puzzles. Intelligence also affects your chance of successfully hitting an opponent with a spell.

SPIRIT (**SPR**): On Oceana, the mundane realm is just one part of life. Spirit reflects the strength of a person's soul, and is important for casting spells and resisting evil spirits. Spirit also determines the number of power points retained by magic-users.

POWER (**POW**): Power is derived from spirit, and represents spell points used for energizing magic spells. Once spent on a spell, power points do not naturally regenerate...you will need to use a Dragonstone or find some other means of regenerating Power. For this reason, power points should be used with discretion. Power is twice your Spirit.

HEALTH: Health is terrifically important, for when health is reduced to zero, the character dies. Health can be restored only by certain spells, retaining the services of a healer, or through use of the BANDAGE skill. Death is usually permanent on Oceana, but legend holds that somewhere in the depths of the Magan Underworld can be found the Well of Souls, within which resurrection is possible.

STUN: Stun is derived from health, and represents the ability to resist damage before a character falls unconscious at a stun value of zero. Characters generally run out of stun before they run out of health. Stun fully regenerates following every melee — you'll find yourself taking a lot of stun damage in the game, but it isn't really serious unless the whole party gets stunned all at once.

SEX: Male, female, sometimes, or never.

EXPERIENCE: Experience points are an abstract measure of a character's activity. The more things a character does — the more monsters he slays, the more secrets he discovers—the more experience points will be earned. Experience points translate into levels.

LEVEL: Levels are gained automatically as a character earns experience points. The computer will let you know when a character attains a new level. Initially your characters will rapidly gain levels, but after the fourth or fifth level you'll notice character growth is considerably slowed. This is because it requires progressively greater and greater amounts of experience to reach the higher levels. When your character reaches a new level, he receives two new character points that can either be saved or spent on skills and attributes.

ARMOR CLASS (**AC**): This rating indicates the quality of your armor. The more (and better) armor you wear, the more damage it can absorb before it starts counting against your health and stun. Armor does *not* make it harder for opponents to hit you. It *does* increase your life expectancy by taking damage that would otherwise be taken by your skull, ribs, etc. Remember, armor does not contribute to your DV — it may actually reduce AV. But your AC will rise if you wear armor, and it will help you survive.

ATTACK VALUE (**AV**) & DEFENSE VALUE (**DV**): These factors are based on your dexterity value divided by four, and are the basic statistics influencing combat. You'll want these numbers to be as high as possible, as they determine how often you will hit your enemies with weapons and spells, and how often you will be hit by the same. Some items increase or decrease AV and/or DV. Weapons usually improve AV, while armor actually decreases your combat values — armor will encumber you and may impair your performace slightly.

Your AV is different for magical combat and weapon combat, depending on your magical skills and weapon skills. These skills do improve your AV but the improvement is not shown on the AV gauge. For example, Raggletok has a Dexterity of 16and a crossbow skill of 1, and no other weapon skills. His base AV is 4; that's his Dexterity divided by four. When using a mace in combat, Raggletok's AV is 4, since he has no weapon skills to increase his combat proficiency. However, when using a crossbow, his AV is 5 because of the influence of the crossbow skill. Remember, whichever skills he may be using at the time, Dragon Wars will display only his base AV without skill modifications - modifications for actual weapons or armor will be reflected.

SKILLS

Skills reflect a character's areas of expertise. Correct selection and use of skills is the key to completing the DRAGON WARS adventure.

Skills are defined by type and level. In most cases a skill need not exceed level one to be useful, but to complete the game certain skills will have to be higher. For instance, a single level of skill is perfectly adequate for most of the LORE skills. Eventually attaining two or three levels of skill in LOCKPICK, BANDAGE, CLIMB, and the weapons and magic skills is recommended. Skills always begin at level one, but can be initially purchased at higher levels, or improved during play by the accumulation of experience points.

It isn't necessary for every character to have every skill. You can divide the labor to your advantage if you decide to have one LOCKPICK specialist, for example, a couple of characters with BANDAGE skill, and a CLIMBer. As long as you work as a team, specialization will help you survive.

SKILL DESCRIPTIONS

BANDAGE: A very important skill, as healing services are scarce in Dilmun. With greater skill, more health can be restored to an injured character.

CAVE LORE: Many of Dilmun's dangerous and exciting places are found underground, and having this skill may yield important information at appropriate moments.

CLIMB: Use this skill to climb over rocks, up into trees, and down to certain doom. Some obstacles require high levels of skill to overcome.

FOREST LORE: Dilmun is largely a wild place, and this skill yields knowledge of how to operate in a wooded environment. This skill is important to the Druids, who inhabit the forest lands of Dilmun's wilderness.

HIDING: If you can't kill something, and you can't outrun it, your only hope is to hide. Note that once you're in combat, it's too late.

TRACKER: While your characters' mundane eating and sleeping concerns are invisibly maintained by the game, you might find it useful to hunt every now and then. Using this skill allows you to track various creatures, be they men or beasts.

LOCKPICK: Valuable objects are usually locked within chests or behind doors. Seeing as how Namtar robbed you of all your worldly goods, you'll doubtless want to engage in a little first hand social reform by robbing from the rich (everyone else) to give to the poor (yourself). Knowing how to pick a lock is important to resolving your quest.

MAGIC SKILLS: The skills of LOW MAGIC, HIGH MAGIC, DRUID MAGIC, & SUN MAGIC are required to learn spells of a specific type. Furthermore, you must have the LOW MAGIC skill before you can learn any of the others. High levels of magic skill are useful, as they determine the maximum number of power points you can invest when casting a spell — the higher your applicable magic skill level, the greater the potential of your spells. A higher level of magic skill also increases the chance your spells will accurately hit their targets.

MOUNTAIN LORE: Fabulous treasures and fearsome beasts reside in Oceana's mountainous climbs. Knowledge of the world's high mountain places might save your life.

FISTFIGHTING: Adds to your ability to hit when using fists.

ARCANE LORE: Dilmun is a magical place, and it's important to know about the world's magic, mysticism, and gods. A well-rounded sorcerer will combine magical might with arcane lore.

BUREAUCRACY: To liberate Dilmun from Namtar's foul grip, you will need to sway hearts and minds. To this end, skill in public speaking is important, as represented by the BUREAUCRACY skill. You might also have success using this skill on stubborn guards and petty officials.

SWIM: While it is generally not possible to swim between the islands of Dilmun, this skill will help you should you find yourself unexpectedly underwater. A character who can't swim could find himself in deep water.

TOWN LORE: You will visit many of the towns of Dilmun in the course of your adventures — this skill will provide you with local legends and history.

PICKPOCKET: Times are hard in Dilmun, but there may still be a few unwary folk that you can practice this age-old skill on.

WEAPON SKILLS: You need not have the relevant skill to use a weapon, but doing so will improve your performance with the weapon in question. Each level of weapon skill adds 1 to your AV when you use that type of weapon. Note that the effects of weapon skills are not shown on the display of your AV, but rest assured the additional effects of your weapons skills are invisibly maintained by the computer.

For example, if Muskels the Barbarian has a 20 Dexterity, he'll have a base AV of 5. Armed with a flail and a Flail skill of 1, his AV with the flail will be 6, but Dragon Wars will only display his AV as 5, because the effects of weapon skills are not shown on the display.

When creating characters, there are several ways to get your AV up. You can either have a high Dexterity, which will increase both your AV and DV, or you can choose to add to your weapon skills, which will increase only your AV at a cheaper cost. Adding to weapon skills also restricts you to a certain weapon if you want the additonal AV.

SKILL USE

In some cases, merely knowing a skill will be enough to benefit from it. This is sometimes the case with the Lore skills, which yield useful bits of knowledge at the appropriate time if a sufficient level of Lore knowledge is present. If one of your characters suddenly notes an odd detail and you didn't select the USE command, then a Lore skill has kicked in.

Other skills will require that you actually use them to be effective. If you're confronted by a puzzle or obstacle which you think can be solved by skill use, select the skill you want (see the reference card) and follow the prompts. You can use items and attributes using the same prompts. If you fail, but are still convinced you've used the proper skill, you probably need a higher proficiency level in the skill in question—come back and try again after you've learned a thing or two.

MAGIC

Namtar, the Beast From the Pit, is the mightiest sorcerer of Dilmun. Smart boy that he is, Namtar has manipulated King Drake of Kingshome into declaring a general ban on magic, thus giving Namtar a monopoly on this world's true power. The City States of Dilmun, none too closely allied to begin with, did not take kindly to this decree, and open warfare resulted. Spellcasting legions were chewed up in the opening weeks of the war, while conventional forces continue the struggle to this day. Namtar's Stosstrupen, a sort of magical secret police, eliminated most of Dilmun's top individual sorcerers before an effective resistance could be organized.

Namtar has all but won the war, and the formal practice of magic has been outlawed in Dilmun. Rumors persist that magic is still taught in secret out-of-the-way places, and it is one of your tasks to recover the world's lost magical knowledge.

Learning a spell always entails using magic scrolls. After a scroll is used, it vanishes forever, although the character reading the scroll will remember the spell for the rest of his life. Using scrolls is easy — finding them is the difficult part, but no one said the life of a hero was simple.

There are four branches of magic in DRAGON WARS. All wizards must begin with Low Magic. There is no established school of Low Magic; teaching chores are handled by assorted bush wizards and holy men. Because teaching of Low Magic is so widespread — and because Low Magic is relatively mundane — Namtar has done little to shut it down. There's actually a functioning Low Magic shop in Purgatory.

The acknowledged master of High Magic was Lanac'toor, a dangerously unstable being formerly in residence in the City of the Yellow Mud Toad. Lanac'toor was the Stosstrupen's first target — he was ambushed while torpid following an excessive feast of lampreys. Lanac'toor's body was first turned to stone and then smashed to pieces. With Lanac'toor's demise, the practice of High Magic all but vanished from Dilmun, but rumors persist Lanac'toor himself had a teacher, and that the teacher resides somewhere in the Eastern Isles.

Oddly, Sun Magic remains public and legal. The Master of Sun Magic is Mystalvision, a great public hero in residence at the Temple of the Sun in Phoebus. Sun Magic has gained popularity in recent years as the great star Sirius gradually drowns the planet by melting the polar icecaps. Sun Magic combat spells are the most potent in the game.

Druid Magic is the way of the elements and the beasts, and is the purest of all magic, although not nearly so powerful as High Magic. The most skillful druid is Zaton the Displaced, of which the current whereabouts are unknown. The Druid Magic cult has been driven underground by Namtar's persecution, but worship of the cult's patron deity, the beast-man Enkidu, continues at the various Druid shrines.

There is one further "class" of magic in Dragon Wars: that which is called "Miscellaneous Magic." These three spells are usable by anyone who has skill in any of the four standard classes of magic.

When you cast a spell, the computer always deducts a certain number of Power points from the caster. In some cases, you'll be prompted to indicate the number of points you want to invest in a spell. In such cases, the extra points will increase the duration of the spell or its damage or effectiveness. The number of points you can invest in these spells is limited to twice your current skill level in that area of magic.

The following few pages contain descriptions of all the world's known spells. Although many spells are well-documented through centuries of use, some descriptions are incomplete because of the spells' experimental or foreign nature. And, perhaps, because some spellcasters have placed themselves in great peril by playing with forces they do not know.... Because of this, you will have to experiment with spell use to learn the best application of magic in each situation. In fact, creative use of spells may be a vital element necessary to solve the game.

List of Magic Spells

Key to spells

SPELL NAME

Description of the spell, miscellaneous notes, and tips on casting

Effect: **Damage or other effects**
Range: **Distance the spell can be cast**
Target: **Who is affected by spell**
Time: **Duration of spell**
Power: **Power points taken**

Char 1 character
Group 1 group of monsters
Party Every character in your party
Var Variable. The more points you expend, the more damage or extended time. Maximum equals 2 times your skill in that magic class.

1-6 x P Damage shown multiplied by power points expended
hr. Hour in the game (not real time)
Combat Duration of entire encounter. Once one side or the other is defeated or flees, the spell ends.

Low Magic

MAGE FIRE

The beginning zap spell, and always worth falling back on if nothing more powerful is at hand.

Effect: **1-8 pts**
Range: **30'**
Target: **1 foe**
Time: **--**
Power: **2**

CHARM

This simple enchantment offers a small bonus to a character's ability in combat, and will heal 1-2 points of damage.

Effect: **+1 AV**
Range: **Heal**
Target: **Char**
Time: **Combat**
Power: **3**

LESSER HEAL

A simple heal spell, restoring up to four points of health. Heal spells are very important, because you can't use the Bandage skill in combat. Learn a heal spell if you want to survive!

Effect: **1-4 pts**
Range: **Heal**
Target: **Char**
Time: **--**
Power: **2**

DISARM

This incantation disarms one foe--that is, if it carries a weapon. Dragons' claws not affected.

Effect: **Disarm**
Range: **30'**
Target: **1 foe**
Time: **--**
Power: **4**

LUCK

If you'd rather be lucky than good, cast this spell on yourself or a friend. It improves your DV for the duration of the combat.

Effect: **+2 DV**
Range: **--**
Target: **Char**
Time: **Combat**
Power: **3**

MAGE LIGHT

Useful for exploring dark places when a mundane source of light is not available. A "torch" icon will appear for the duration of the spell.

Effect: **Light**
Range: **--**
Target: **Party**
Time: **Variable**
Power: **1 = 3 hr**

High Magic

COMBAT SPELLS

FIRE LIGHT

An improved zap spell. The greater the power of the caster, the more damage this spell will do.

Effect: **1-6 x P**
Range: **30'**
Target: **1 foe**
Time: **--**
Power: **Var**

POOG'S VORTEX

An improved version of Elvar's Fire, created by the arch-wizard Poog to suck away the life force of his foes.

Effect: **4-24 pts**
Range: **20'**
Target: **Group**
Time: **--**
Power: **11**

BIG CHILL

An area-effect version of Ice Chill that will inflict up to 24 points of damage to all opponents within range.

Effect: **4-24 pts**
Range: **30'**
Target: **All**
Time: **--**
Power: **15**

MYSTIC MIGHT

Instant muscles for the friend of your choice, lasting for the entire combat.

Effect: **+15 Str**
Range: **--**
Target: **Char**
Time: **Combat**
Power: **4**

COWARDICE

Fearsome foes suddenly fear you. They will either run away, or continue to stand and fight if they resist the spell. Works best against weaker opponents.

Effect: **Foes run**
Range: **60'**
Target: **Group**
Time: **--**
Power: **8**

ELVAR'S FIRE

This was Lanac'toor's favorite method of dispersing autograph seekers. While this spell doesn't pack much punch, it is an area-effect weapon, and can sometimes take out whole groups of lesser foes.

Effect: **2-12 pts**
Range: **30'**
Target: **Group**
Time: **--**
Power: **6**

ICE CHILL

A precise spell that usually results in a frigid death for the victim. Like the Fire Light spell, Ice Chill is power-based, and while not so potent as Fire Light for beginners, it works at greater range.

Effect: **1-4 x P**
Range: **50'**
Target: **1 foe**
Time: **--**
Power: **Var**

DAZZLE

Use this spell to befuddle simple foes, but make sure someone is on hand to exploit your enemy's hesitation.

Effect: **Miss turn**
Range: **30'**
Target: **1 foe**
Time: **--**
Power: **3**

REVEAL GLAMOUR

A very important spell that will (usually) dispel illusions. All is not as it seems, especially in the Eastern Isles.

Effect: **Dispel**
Range: **40'**
Target: **Group**
Time: **--**
Power: **2**

VORN'S GUARD

Originally developed to protect a king and his entourage, this spell is excellent for parties desiring a blanket of magical protection. Improves armor class (i.e. damage absorbed), but has no effect on DV.

Effect: **+2 AC**
Range: **--**
Target: **Party**
Time: **Combat**
Power: **6**

COMBAT SPELLS

SALA'S SWIFT

Improves the dexterity of a single character, for the duration of an entire combat. This will improve the target's AV and DV.

Effect: +8 Dex
Range: --
Target: Char
Time: Combat
Power: 5

OTHER SPELLS

AIR SUMMON

Conjures an air elemental for whatever lofty goal you pursue. See the "Summoning" notes after the spell listing for further information.

Effect: Summon
Range: --
Target: --
Time: Var
Power: 1 = 4 hr

EARTH SUMMON

Creates a potent creature from stone and soil, under your command. The earth elemental is somewhat stronger and more durable than the air elemental.

Effect: Summon
Range: --
Target: --
Time: Var
Power: 1 = 4 hr

WATER SUMMON

Allies a spirit of the water for a time. Water elementals are a bit more powerful and strong than earth elementals.

Effect: Summon
Range: --
Target: --
Time: Var
Power: 1 = 4 hr

FIRE SUMMON

Summons a fire elemental. Guaranteed to brighten up a party. The fire elemental is the most powerful known.

Effect: Summon
Range: --
Target: --
Time: Var
Power: 1 = 4 hr

HEALING SPELLS

HEALING

More potent than the Low Magic 'Lesser Heal' spell, this enchantment can set broken bones and stop internal bleeding.

Effect: 1-6 pts
Range: --
Target: Char
Time: --
Power: 3

GROUP HEAL

A group medical plan the entire party will appreciate. Restores up to six points of health to each character.

Effect: 1-6 pts
Range: --
Target: Party
Time: --
Power: 6

OTHER SPELLS

SENSE TRAPS

Safely guides you past dangerous deadfalls without tripping the traps.

Effect: Sense
Range: --
Target: Party
Time: Var
Power: 1 = 2 hr

CLOAK ARCANE

Renders the party partially invisible, diverting both the light around you and the force of your opponents' blows.

Effect: +2 AC
Range: --
Target: Party
Time: Var
Power: 1 = 1 hr

Sun Magic

COMBAT SPELLS

SUN STROKE

The Sun Magic version of 'Fire Light.' Subtle distinctions are claimed by those familiar with both spells.

Effect: **1-8 x P**
Range: **20'**
Target: **1 foe**
Time: **--**
Power: **Var**

RAGE OF MITHRAS

A hideously powerful spell thankfully restricted in that it can only harm one victim at a time. Can hit an enemy up to 70 feet away.

Effect: **1-6 x P**
Range: **70'**
Target: **1 foe**
Time: **--**
Power: **Var**

FIRE STORM

Simply the most hideous spell known to man.

Effect: **6-36 pts**
Range: **60'**
Target: **All**
Time: **--**
Power: **20**

HOLY AIM

Sheds divine light on a melee, and guides a righteous group in smiting their foes.

Effect: **+2 AV**
Range: **--**
Target: **Party**
Time: **Combat**
Power: **5**

COLUMN OF FIRE

Sheets of flame fall from the heavens, preventing a group of opponents from advancing during their turn in combat.

Effect: **Stops**
Range: **40'**
Target: **Group**
Time: **--**
Power: **5**

EXORCISM

The undead cannot abide the light of the sun. Usually. Not effective against the living.

Effect: **6-36 pts**
Range: **50'**
Target: **Group**
Time: **--**
Power: **5**

WRATH OF MITHRAS

An even more hideously powerful spell, featuring a small blast radius. Damage is lower than the Rage of Mithras, but affects a group.

Effect: **1-4 x P**
Range: **90'**
Target: **Group**
Time: **--**
Power: **Var**

INFERNO

An underpowered version of Fire Storm. In the hands of an experienced character, it can actually cause more damage while using less power.

Effect: **1-4 x P**
Range: **40'**
Target: **All**
Time: **--**
Power: **Var**

BATTLE POWER

Significantly improves the muscle ability of any band of heroes.

Effect: **+10 Str**
Range: **--**
Target: **Party**
Time: **Combat**
Power: **8**

MITHRA'S BLESS

Shields a group from harm with a blanket blessing, courtesy of an alien god.

Effect: **+3 DV**
Range: **--**
Target: **Party**
Time: **Combat**
Power: **5**

COMBAT SPELLS

LIGHT FLASH

Produces a blinding flash that might disorient foes. Especially useful against underground enemies and creatures unaccustomed to the light.

Effect: **lose turn**
Range: **50'**
Target: **Group**
Time: **--**
Power: **6**

ARMOR OF LIGHT

Cloaks a character in gleaming magic armor proof against most attacks.

Effect: **+2 AC**
Range: **--**
Target: **Char**
Time: **Combat**
Power: **6**

HEALING SPELLS

SUN LIGHT

Improves the health of any one character. A little sun light never hurt anyone.

Effect: **1-6 pts**
Range: **--**
Target: **Char**
Time: **--**
Power: **3**

HEAL

A potent heal spell which affects one character.

Effect: **2-8 pts**
Range: **--**
Target: **Char**
Time: **--**
Power: **4**

MAJOR HEAL

The best value in Sun Magic heal spells when more than one character is injured. Dispenses one 'Sun Light' spell on each party member.

Effect: **1-6 pts**
Range: **--**
Target: **Party**
Time: **--**
Power: **6**

OTHER SPELLS

CHARGER

The perfect pick-me-up for depleted magic items. Non-addictive.

Effect: **Charge**
Range: **--**
Target: **1 item**
Time: **--**
Power: **8**

DISARM TRAP

Will safely trigger a trap. All you have to do is walk into a trap, and it'll safely be sprung.

Effect: **disarm**
Range: **--**
Target: **--**
Time: **Var**
Power: **1 = 2 hr**

GUIDANCE

Accurately tells you the direction you face. Very useful underground, where your friendly direction gauge is useless.

Effect: **Compass**
Range: **--**
Target: **--**
Time: **Var**
Power: **1 = 3 hr**

RADIANCE

The best light spell known to wizardkind.

Effect: **Light**
Range: **40'**
Target: **Party**
Time: **Var**
Power: **1 = 2 hr**

SUMMON SALAMANDER

Either this spell conjures a potent magical creature, or it blows the caster's skull off. Give us a call and let us know.

Effect: **Summon**
Range: **--**
Target: **--**
Time: **Var**
Power: **1 = 4 hr**

Druid Magic

COMBAT SPELLS

DEATH CURSE

A savage spell left over from the bad old days, designed to punch the ticket of someone you hate. Causes up to 18 points of damage to the target.

Effect: **3-18 pts**
Range: **40'**
Target: **1 foe**
Time: **--**
Power: **6**

INSECT PLAGUE

A formidable way to weaken some monsters' defenses, and a real drag at picnics. Reduces a group's AV and DV, making them vulnerable.

Effect: **-2 AV, DV**
Range: **60'**
Target: **Group**
Time: **Combat**
Power: **4**

SCARE

If cast at the right time, can improve your party's ability in the eyes of your foes.

Effect: **+2 AV**
Range: **--**
Target: **Party**
Time: **Combat**
Power: **4**

FIRE BLAST

This potent spell unleashes a minor fire storm on one group of foes. Use with discretion.

Effect: **4-24 pts**
Range: **30'**
Target: **group**
Time: **--**
Power: **12**

WHIRL WIND

Possibly transports one or more foes away from you on a twisting cone of howling winds.

Effect: **Push 30'**
Range: **40'**
Target: **Group**
Time: **--**
Power: **4**

BRAMBLES

Erects a temporary barrier of thorns between your party and a group of opponents. Use the time thus gained to plan an effective attack.

Effect: **Miss turn**
Range: **60'**
Target: **group**
Time: **1 round**
Power: **5**

OTHER SPELLS

CREATE WALL

Erects a barrier of stone before the party. Also of use in repairing old buildings.

Effect: **Create**
Range: **--**
Target: **--**
Time: **--**
Power: **5**

BEAST CALL

This holy spell of Enkidu is used in secret Druid rituals.

Effect: **Summon**
Range: **--**
Target: **--**
Time: **Var**
Power: **1 = 4 hr**

SOFTEN STONE

A very powerful spell popular with civil engineers. Useful for underground construction and removing certain walls.

Effect: **Remove**
Range: **--**
Target: **--**
Time: **--**
Power: **6**

WOOD SPIRIT

Creates a helpful ally from wood and bramble.

Effect: **Summon**
Range: **--**
Target: **--**
Time: **Var**
Power: **1 = 4 hr**

HEALING SPELLS

GREATER HEALING

Uses natural energies to rejuvenate and heal the wounds of any one character.

Effect: **1-6 pts**
Range: **--**
Target: **Char**
Time: **--**
Power: **4**

CURE ALL

The most powerful and efficent healing spell that ancient Druid learning has devised.

Effect: **1-8 pts**
Range: **--**
Target: **Party**
Time: **--**
Power: **6**

OTHER SPELLS

INVOKE SPIRIT

Summons a friendly spirit to aid you in battle. See the restrictions and features described in the "Summoning Spells" section.

Effect: **Summon**
Range: **--**
Target: **--**
Time: **Var**
Power: **1 = 4 hr**

Miscellaneous Magic

ZAK'S SPEED

Named for a sorceror of long ago, a nifty spell that improves the Dexterity of all characters in the party.

Effect: **+15 Dex**
Range: **--**
Target: **Party**
Time: **Combat**
Power: **10**

PRISON

Pins a group of foes beneath the weight of a magical barrier, preventing them from advancing or running away.

Effect: **Halt**
Range: **60'**
Target: **Group**
Time: **Combat**
Power: **8**

KILL RAY

Courtesy of the demented Czar Strahkenhorc out of centuries past, this deadly beam will waste anything it strikes. Beware the terrible cost of this spell, as it can quickly drain a weak or weary wizard.

Effect: **10-80 pts**
Range: **50'**
Target: **1 foe**
Time: **--**
Power: **15**

A note on spell icons: The computer shows you that certain spells (most notably the light spells) are active by displaying an appropriate icon on the screen. When the icon vanishes, the spell has run out of juice and is no longer active. In the case of light spells, this usually results in the sudden onset of darkness. For the detect spells, it means you're no longer likely to detect danger at a distance.

Monster Summoning: A word is warranted on the subject of conjuring up creatures from other locales or dimensions for use in combat. Several High Magic and Druid Magic incantations bring forth creatures of this sort to do your bidding. All of these spells have some things in common: you must have an open character slot in your party to accommodate the summoned creature. You should also be aware that summoned creatures do not last forever, and will eventually return to the magic worlds from which they appeared, leaving a lifeless husk behind. The more Power points you invest in summoning a creature, the longer you can expect it to stick around. Finally, the lengthy and precise summoning spells cannot be cast in combat. Although summoned creatures come complete with their own armor and weaponry, you may be able to equip them with any items you choose.

COMBAT

Unless you're willing to roll over and die, you're going to have to fight. Fortunately, you have lots of options during combat, and if you exhibit the proper mix of prudence and courage you should emerge victorious more often than not.

You'll know a fight is brewing when a picture of some nasty being appears on the screen. The computer will tell you what you've encountered, and set the range at which the encounter begins. You'll have to close to within ten feet of the enemy before you can enter hand to hand combat, but spells and missile weapons can be used at varying ranges.

When facing a battle you can always run away, but it's more fun to fight. The game offers you two types of combat: Quick Fight, and Fight.

Quick Fighting gives you more limited combat options to speed encounters along.

If you choose Fight, instead of Quick Fight, you have a few more options. First off, you'll have the option of striking a normal blow (just like the quick fight option), a mightly blow (reduced chance of hitting, but improves damage done to the target), or a disarm blow (try to knock your opponent's weapon away without doing much damage). You also have a chance to rearrange your party, which is important if one or more characters have been incapacitated or killed — only the first four characters in the party order can actually fight in hand-to-hand combat. Finally, you can attempt to block, which improves your DV against the attack of a single foe.

In either type of combat, you always have the option to use an item, run (shame on you!), dodge, or cast a spell. Dodging is similar to blocking, but it works against all enemies in the combat and is less effective.

Note that if you run from an encounter, the computer will actually run you across the map you are on for several moves...if you return to the scene of your defeat, don't be surprised if you run into the same enemies again. Just because you turned tail doesn't mean the bad guys are going to pack it in!

GETTING AROUND

The computer simulates the perspective view available to your characters. Think of the computer as a window to the world of DRAGON WARS. Check your reference card for specifics on how navigate around the world.

If you lose track of where you are, or start to develop a dangerous case of tunnel vision, try using the automap feature. (See your reference card for how to invoke automap.) You'll call up a top-down view of your character's present position, showing exactly where you are in relation to the local terrain. Black areas on the map represent areas you haven't explored yet — you must actually move through a square with your party to fill it in on the automap. Black areas that you cannot reach may indicate secret adventure areas worthy of further investigation. Then again, they may be solid rock.

Speaking of secret stuff, you'll find plenty of it in the game. Secret doors are indistinguishable from normal walls...until you walk through them. Clever use of the automap may reveal where secret doors "should" be. You'll know a locked door when you bump into it — try battering the door down with strength, or maybe use your lockpick skill. The game also features exotic and rare one-way doors, teleporters, spinners, and...well, find out for yourself.

PARAGRAPHS EXPLAINED

Frequently you will be instructed by the computer to read a certain numbered paragraph. The paragraphs are printed in the paragraph text section of this manual (see page 20), and supplement the briefer on-line text present in the program. Paragraphs frequently elaborate on the information provided by the computer, but are an important source of clues and are not to be overlooked.

You'll greatly increase your enjoyment of the game by only reading those paragraphs to which you are specifically referred by the game. "Reading ahead" could spoil some of the surprises that await you in DRAGON WARS. Don't try to read the paragraphs consecutively, as they are printed out of order and will prove confusing.

Ultimately, you put down your hard earned cash for this game, and you can of course do what you damn well please with the paragraphs. However, should you use the paragraphs as a free "cheat book", beware the wrath of Namtar...and be advised certain paragraphs are pure ya-ya that will do nothing to improve your performance in the game. In fact, acting on ill-gotten information could prove hazardous to your health. You have been warned.

ITEMS

Almost as important as your attributes, spells, and skills are the items you will discover during your quest. An item is anything you can pick up. A very few items are worthless, but everything else you find, buy, or steal in DRAGON WARS could be important to completing the game.

Simple items are things like weapons (used to do mayhem to the bad guys) and armor (used to prevent the bad guys from doing the same to you). Magic armor and weapons can also be found in Dilmun — and there are no cursed magic items. Certain weapons could actually decrease your AV, but this means they're harder to use, not that they are imbued with evil magic. As Muskels the Barbarian said of his Crush Mace, "Yeah, it was harder to swing, but boy did it crack skulls!"

The use of many items may not be immediately obvious. Sometimes you will need to discover secret knowledge or clues to determine what to do with an item. Other times an item may be useful only in some part of the world you have not discovered. Keep track of the items your party carries, and try to use them in novel ways. The secret to item use is to consider all the things an item can do...if you find a key, it is probably used to open a lock. If you haven't yet found a lock, remember you have a key, and keep your eyes open for locked doors or chests as you explore. No character can carry more than twelve items.

IMPORTANT: If you "discard" an item, it is gone forever...and along with it may go your only hope of solving the game, so manage your items carefully.

The various stores in Dilmun can only keep certain mundane, plentiful items in stock; there is high demand for the unusual. If you find unique items during your adventure and sell them to a store, they will be sold to other adventurers, and you cannot buy them back.

To use an item, follow your reference card's instructions on the "Use" command, and follow the menus. Select the item you want to use and give it a try. The worst that will happen is you'll look silly, and most of the time no one is looking anyway. Actually, that's not exactly true. Some magic items have limited uses. Once you've shot up an item's charges it usually cannot be re-charged, so a certain amount of resource management should be applied to item use.

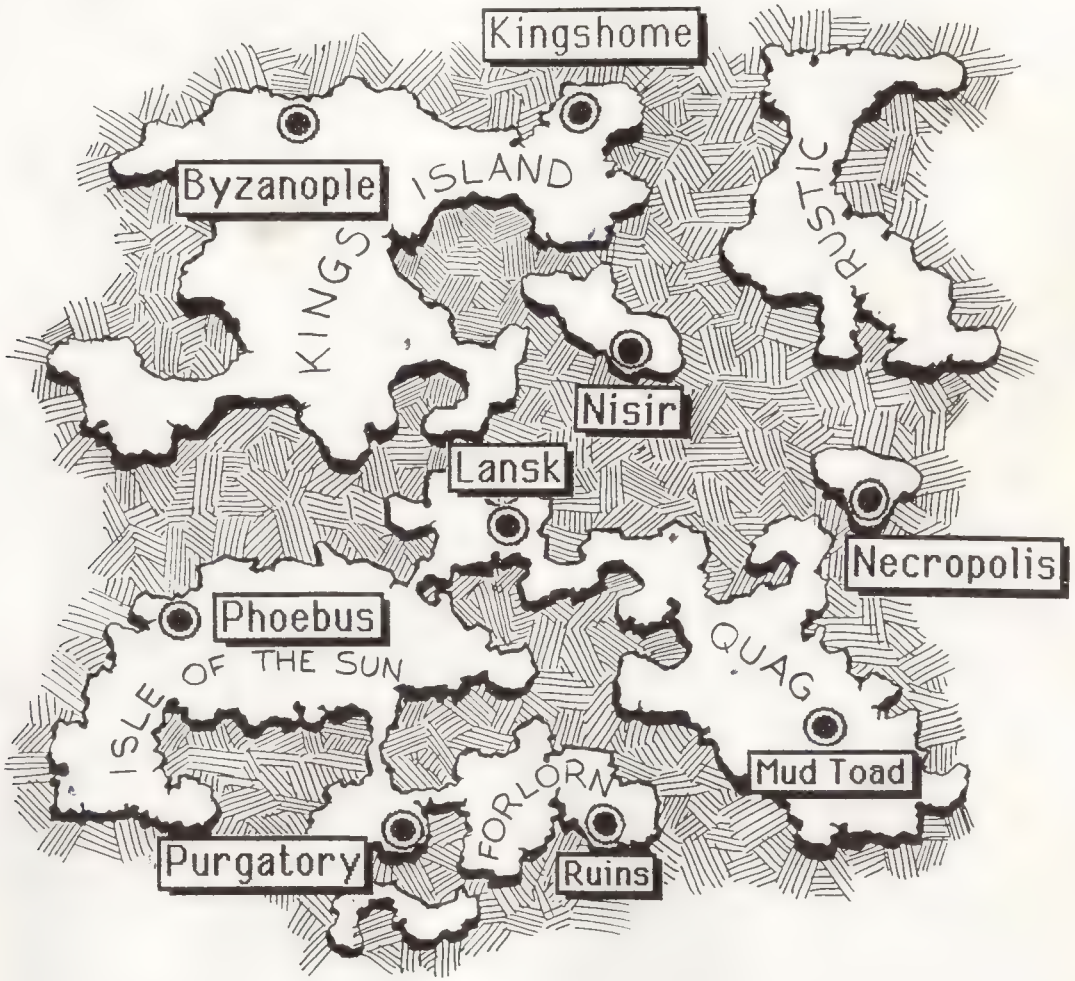
A FINAL NOTE

DRAGON WARS is as much a story as a game. To complete your quest you must pay careful attention to your environment, and realize you are in the middle of a fully-developed fantasy world. Very little happens in this game without a reason. Take note of details, consider what motivates your enemy, and keep your eyes open. Finally, don't be afraid to take control of your own life. You are the hero of this saga, and without you there is no adventure.

Good luck.

HOLIDAY GUIDE TO OCEANA AND DILMUN, THE LAND WHERE THE SUN SETS

"Dilmun" is the name used to refer to the group of islands where the DRAGON WARS adventure is set. Collectively, Dilmun is viewed by the residents of the planet Oceana as a place of salvation and retirement. Under Namtar's foul rule, this formerly fair land has been twisted into a place of ruin and death. In better times, the Navigational Guild compiled this map of Dilmun for the benefit of pilgrims.



Dragon Wars Paragraphs

1) In this dark chamber are warehoused several sculptures of decidedly inferior quality. Mostly they are crude attempts at busts, or full-figure nudes of decidedly pornographic intent. Whoever produced these disasters, it could not have been the same artist that created the rest of the artwork you've seen on the estate.

2) Renewed by the fruit of your sacrifice, the vampire lord emerges from the tomb. "You have awakened me, and for this I am in your debt," he lisps. "Do not presume to command me, however. You have not obtained the Silver Wheel, and until you do, my soul is my own!"

The Lord of the Undead vanishes, leaving behind only an oily cloud of smoke, and the bucket of deep-fried jumbo shrimp. Back to the drawing board.

3) This is a shrine to the dark lady Irkalla, queen of Magan, the underworld of Oceana. Of all the structures in this area, this is the best preserved. Simple offerings of weeds and rocks lay before Irkalla, indicating some residents of this world worship the dark queen.

Irkalla's image is blasted from bronze. She seems serene and confident, with a terrible sort of beauty lurking in her fierce countenance. The black pits of her eyes stare at you without emotion. Here is a deity to be feared — perhaps also to be loved.

4) You stand before the gate to Purgatory's great public arena. Bloodthirsty residents of the Dilmun interior come here to enjoy the spectacle of outlander scum such as yourselves fighting to the death on the floor of the arena.

A guard swaggers up to you. He is clad in the trappings of authority — fine armor, a weather-beaten harness, well-oiled weapons. "Oy there, you filthy street scum," the guard growls. "You look fit enough to hold a weapon. Why not haul your butt into the arena and make yourself useful?" Why fight for another man's pleasure when life in Purgatory is a daily struggle for survival? You're about to turn away when the guard lays a heavy hand on your shoulder and adds, "You'll get your choice of arms...and if you defeat your foe, which I doubt, you might win Papers of Citizenship. Namtar help me — heathen dogs like you living in Dilmun! I don't like it, but the law is the law."

5) With distaste you discover the source of the foul odor. Before you is a low structure, not so much a building as an odd series of stone slabs leaning against one another. Some ancient stonemason identified this place with a legend carved into the rock: "Morgue". A more recent hand has added its own opinion: "The way out, chumps!".

The stench of the dead is overpowering, but sensing there's something important about this place, you hang around on the fringes and observe the routine. Sallow work gangs of malnourished slaves, themselves more dead than alive, slowly carry corpses from the building and stack them in sloppy piles. You dimly wonder what crime or heresy landed these poor souls a job as slaves in a city of criminals.

From time to time additional corpses are brought here by the more tidy citizens of Purgatory. These are deposited in the house or stacked in the piles without seeming purpose. After a time, several of the slaves bundle one or more corpses into a crude canvas sack and hurl the bundle over the wall. Distantly, you think you hear a splash. You judge you're near the harbor wall — are the dead of Purgatory hurled into the waters of the city's harbor?

It occurs to you a living man could lay with the dead, and journey with them in a sack over the wall and to freedom in the harbor beyond. How far do the sacks of corpses fall? Are they really tossed in the harbor, or do they tumble into a well? Could you escape from a bag of cadavers before it sank to the bottom of the sea, maybe forever mired in muck and weeds? Perhaps the overpowering smell of this place is starting to get to you. Or perhaps this is your ticket out.

6) Here you find a simple wilderness shrine, tended by a lonely druid. He welcomes you to his temple, saying the place of worship is open to all.

The shrine is earthy and natural. The walls seem rooted in the depths of the earth, the rock seems alive with animal spirit, the very air is crisp and sweet. You see that the patron deity of this shrine is the man-animal Enkidu. "He is the god of beast-men and man-beasts," the druid explains. "He respects only the strong and pure, to whom he will grant a powerful boon. Before Namtar's purge, the god was in residence in this forest, where he presided over a vast druid colony. Now Enkidu is gone, the brotherhood is broken, and knowledge of our magic is lost."

7) You secure yourself in a bag full of only slightly stinking corpses and wait patiently. Someone sews the bag up as you lie motionless. After some moments, you hear a throaty voice call, "Oy, yew! Run yer sword throo them bogs, thar! You 'membar wot hopp'nd last week! We don't wont any mar escayps now, do we?" You are bound and helpless!

8) A great cry of joy goes up as you debase yourself. In a city of criminals, what shame is there in going native? Just to make you feel at home, the beggars beat you steadily for a week. Properly initiated into the world of mendacity, you eventually are set free to wander the streets of Purgatory, better understanding if not entirely fond of the city's lowest class of citizens.

9) A statue of Namtar, the Beast From The Pit, dominates this dirty city square. You carefully examine the statue, trying to memorize the features of the villain who exiled you to Purgatory. You struggle in vain. The citizens of Purgatory, themselves no less fond of Namtar, have taken it out on his image—the nose is broken, limbs are chipped, and the mouth is deformed beyond all recognition.

As you watch, a wild beggar spits on the statue. "Filthy face of stone!," she mumbles. "Layed down with lizards he did, that stone face lies as much as he!" The poor mad creature wanders off, still spitting and mumbling, leading you to wonder if a similar fate awaits you in the months to come.

10) This back-alley building is in remarkably good repair. Curious, you enter, and recognize the interior of a modestly-appointed magic shop. A wizened gnome of a man springs from behind the counter and scurries up to you. "Mercy, mercy me...customers! Bless me, customers at last!"

The old man is insane but friendly. He explains all high magic has been outlawed by order of Namtar, but instruction in the low arts is still permitted in isolated regions. He is eager to teach you what he knows, and will in fact refuse a fee, preferring to teach for the simple joy of it. Unfortunately, the old man knows little useful magic.

11) Try as you might, you just can't get your nose to remain on your face. That Namtar sure has an odd sense of humor.

12) Just ahead you see a bridge. The bridge is covered and armored doors bar the way across. The bridge appears to be the only way to cross the water and reach the land beyond. A pack of guards lounge before the entrance to the bridge. As you appear, they snap to attention. A guard with a narrow forehead and small eyes approaches you.

13) You're in the middle of the bridge. Although the bridge is covered, you can hear water rushing beneath you. It is astonishingly loud.

The bridge is longer than it appeared from the outside. You recognize now that even a good swimmer would find it impossible to swim from one island to the next. This bridge is the only way across.

14) Your knowledge of city lore serves you well. This place isn't so much a city as a prison. The streets are unpaved and evidently double as an open-air sewer system. Many of the city's structures are buildings only in the loosest sense of the word—several have holes in the roof (or no roof at all), others have been gutted by fire. Everything is damp, showing this city is little different from any other on Oceana...the rising sea level is eroding the land upon which the city is located, and it is slowly sinking. Doubtless those buildings that have basements will be at least hip-deep in water. Graffiti is scrawled on walls everywhere, generally curses directed at Namtar and crude pornographic renderings of all the species of Oceana. In all, Purgatory is an ugly place you would do well to leave as soon as possible.

15) The guards retire a few steps and converse in low tones when you show them the ring. One of them approaches nervously. "We're King's men, you know. We don't want any trouble." He shuffles his feet and won't look you in the eye. "We just went along with...with everyone else. You have seen the King?" He frowns when you answer. "That ring means you're on King's business, so you can pass...but if anyone asks, we never saw you. Understand?"

You pass into the city. The guards still won't look you in the eye.

16) Before you is a tumble-down collection of huts. A group of ill-clad unfortunates are gathered around a fire. They see you approach and rush to your side. "We saw you swim across the bay", says a toothless man who seems to lead the group. "Any enemy of Purgatory is a friend of ours. C'mon in and sit by the fire."

17) This is the temple of the Yellow Mud Toad, dedicated to the patron beast of this city. The temple is a run down and depressing as the rest of the city. The center of the temple is dominated by a huge statue of the Yellow Mud Toad, sunk fully a third of its height into the muddy floor of the building. "Everything sinks these days," a priest of the temple complains. "This whole city must be built on a lake. We'll all sink away to nothing if this keeps up!"

18) The camp is deserted. Apparently everyone who lived here was slain in your recent battle. You notice signs of habitation, but whoever lived here was dirt poor. It's unlikely you'll find anything of worth in the camp. Glancing back at the pile of bodies left in your wake, and then at the bucolic scene of the camp, you sense there was probably a better way of handling this situation. The man who confronted you seemed a lot like yourself. Maybe he mistook you for authority from Purgatory, and only sought to defend himself. This was probably a time for words, rather than swords.

19) After about an hour, the sick man's fever breaks. He props himself up on one elbow and smiles. "I was dreaming," he says in a weak voice. "I imagined I floated on a vast black pool far beneath the earth. I think it was in the Underworld. I saw a goddess bound in chains. She was stranded on an island guarded by monsters." He laughs. "I guess I had a fever."

The man tries to stand up but finds he's still weak. You help him sit up. "My name is Ulm," he says. "I guess I have you to thank for breaking my fever. The guards at the bridge beat me up, and I just can't seem to bounce back." Intrigued, you encourage Ulm to continue. "I escaped from Purgatory through a secret door in the wall. I tried to cross the bridge north of the city, but I didn't have the right papers, and the guards beat me. I've been coughing blood ever since."

Ulm's eyelids begin to droop, and in minutes he's asleep again. A moment later his body stiffens, and Ulm dies. At least his final moments were pleasant ones.

20) In the center of the ruined tower that occupies the heart of this city, you find a dais and what's left of a statue. The dais stands about four feet high, and, from the looks of things, appears to have been placed here since the tower was destroyed. A plaque on the dais reads, 'This plaque marks the original location of Lanac'toor's Tower and Magic Academy. This statue commemorates his feats." There used to be a statue atop the dais, but it has been removed, leaving only Lanac'toor's swollen feet behind. The statue appears to have broken off clean at the ankles.

21) You pick your way through the ruins and come upon a spy post maintained by the defenders of Byzanople. Several soldiers are gathered here. They are gaunt from months of isolation—you surmise that if the city does not fall by assault, it will soon succumb from hunger. The soldiers are led by a woman warrior dressed in white and red. As yet, you remain unobserved.

22) This shack has been set up as a universal shrine for Dilmun's many religions. A priest welcomes you and escorts you around the shrine. The majority of the shrine is devoted to Irkalla, the Queen of the Underworld, and her consort Nergal. The priest explains worship of Underworld gods always spreads during times of strife, perhaps because people come to view their own world as an extension of hell. Also represented is the man-animal Enkidu, patron of the Druids, and the obscene Refeek, god of things better left unsaid.

The priest lets you worship or observe as you see fit, neither condemning nor encouraging your actions. "These are hard times," he says, "you had better pray to them all. We can use all the help we can get."

23) You intently scrutinize the murals for several minutes, and are able to arrive at a few broad conclusions. It seems this city square was used to confine a dragon. You remember a legend of the cities of Dilmun holding dragons captive as defense against their neighbors. The murals depict blood sacrifice and obtuse ceremony being used to pacify the dragon. In one of the ceremonies, a priest is depicted aiming a short metal rod at a dragon, seemingly holding the beast under his sway. There is no rendering of the dragon in action. It seems the dragon demanded a terrible price for a purely defensive weapon. Furthermore, the ruins surrounding this square offer mute testimony to the effectiveness of a dragon for city defense.

24) You board the ship as soon as the last of the pirates drops dead, eager to see what it was the thieves were so determined to defend. You see the ship's name is the PRAIRIE MADNESS, and that it seems to be fitted out for fast raiding missions. There isn't much of a cargo hold, so the ship won't serve for long journeys, but it looks very fast and dangerous.

25) "Welcome to Phoebus, City of the Sun!" chirps an odd mechanical voice. You stop in your tracks, trying to identify the source of the voice. After a few moments, you hear the message again, and determine it is coming from a raised stone dais and plaque directly in your path. Evidently the message is activated by your presence. "Welcome to Phoebus, City of the Sun!" the voice says again, this time a little slower than before. You examine the plaque and see it is a a map of the city. "Welllcoooome tooo Phoeeeeebussss, Ciiiityyy offff theeeee Sunnnnnnnn..." the voice intones, now perilously slow. Something's wrong with the device. A mechanical hand protrudes from the dais, frantically trying to shake your hand, but there's no way you're getting near it. Two stern looking gentlemen dressed all in black stare at you, making you nervous. Committing the details of the map to memory, you hurry away from the silly device.
"Wellllllllllllllcooooooooooommmmmeeeeee...!"

26) The walls of this city are of bright marble that seem to glow with an inner light. The streets are paved and clean, and there is no sign of poverty or disorder. The horse carts run on time. You can't shake the feeling something is about to go tragically wrong.

27) You at last stand before the Sword of Freedom. The hilt of the fabled blade is just inches from your grasp. A hush comes over the city of Freeport. The furiously boiling waters previously surrounding this isle have subsided. You look up and see the citizens of Freeport have gathered all around the harbor, waiting to see what you will do next. Some of the citizens appear happy, others are proud, many just wear blank stares. One large man stands silent, but tears roll down his cheeks.

You smell a faint scent of ozone. Somewhere, a baby cries.

28) Two officers occupy this building, evidently associated with the military force drilling on the parade grounds outside. The officers quickly shuffle aside the dice game they were playing when you entered, and snap to attention. They relax when they see who you are, and you sense a change in their attitude.

The elder of the two officers gives you a close inspection. "Such a fine lot of patriotic types," he says. "It's about time someone from this feeble little burg enlisted in the army! Welcome to the service of King Drake. Hail Namtar!"

29) Perilously weakened from your long journey through the swamp, you at last enter the City of the Yellow Mud Toad. The walls here are sagging and brown with grime. The city smells almost as bad as the swamp that surrounds it. Still pools of foul water and puddles of bubbling mud clog the streets. The people of this city shuffle about on their tasks, letting your greetings go unheeded and refusing to look you in the eye.

30) Sheltered at the base of the ruined city wall you find a funky little souvenir shop. A sign in the window identifies the place as "Your Lanac'toor memorabilia shop!" Intrigued, you enter. An unseen bell chimes an offensively sour note as you swing open the door to the shop. Inside you find a remarkable selection of Lanac'toor souvenirs. Images of the mad sorcerer are inscribed on mugs, bowls, plates, bookends, trophies, boxes, candles, and lanterns. Lanac'toor grinning face or family crest is embroidered on hats, ties, underwear, capes, and belts...a store clerk even offers to personalize any item you select, sewing or engraving your name on your purchase. A very small portion of the shop is given over to items unrelated to Lanac'toor. Most of it seems like junk—bits of masonry from the city wall, tiny images of the Yellow Mud Toad, and odd scraps of metal. You are amazed by the single-minded devotion this shop shows to an historical figure so insignificant outside the walls of the City of the Yellow Mud Toad.

31) On the far distant horizon you spot the menacing shape of a black sail. It seems these sea lanes are patrolled by pirates and other scurvy beasts. The enemy ship is down-wind from you—it is only a matter of time before you are caught!

32) Huddled in the shelter of the city's ill-repaired wall you find a militia of wild-eyed men. "Is the war over?" one of them asks. "Does Lanac'toor live?" wonders another.

You are able to piece together something of the history of this place. The patron of the City of the Yellow Mud Toad was a wizard named Lanac'toor. He occupied a tower that formerly stood in the center of town. Lanac'toor quarreled with Namtar when a general ban on magic was announced, and war broke out between the City of the Yellow Mud Toad and Namtar's city of Kingshome. As soon as the war began it was over. Kingshome legions summoned a dragon from the swamp to shatter the walls of the City of the Yellow Mud Toad. Lanac'toor's tower was destroyed and the wizard himself was turned to stone.

After Lanac'toor was killed, the enemy army withdrew, apparently unconcerned with the fate of the City of the Yellow Mud Toad. The citizens of the city are convinced the worst is yet to come, and thus maintain a feeble city militia as defense. It seems unlikely the city has anything worth defending. The men of the militia mutter to themselves as you leave.

33) Ahead you see the walled city of Byzanople. The tattered banner of Byzanople still flies above the city's unbreached walls. The approaches to the city are occupied by the army of Kingshome. The besieging army is spread across the countryside, indicating it has been several months since Byzanople was invaded.

As you approach, several heavily armored soldiers launch an assault on the city. They scramble over rubble and rush the city's gate, waving their weapons and shouting war cries. A hail of arrows, stones, and boiling oil descends upon the attackers wherever they stray too near the wall. The defenders make short work of the Kingshomer assault, and fewer than one in ten of the soldiers launching the assault make it back to their camp.

34) A rough pile of rubble marks the perimeter of the Kingshome advance siege camp. The cyclopean walls of Byzanople are just a few yards away. A twisted path leads through the rubble toward the gates of the city. The path passes beneath the walls of the city, forming a savage killing ground. The path is littered with broken arrow shafts, debris, and the bodies of others who have tried to take this city by storm.

35) This massive central structure dominates the city of Lansk. Unlike the walls that surround this city, this structure is fortified and prepared for war. Armed Lansk guards patrol the battlements, looking stern and ill humored. Written warnings in a variety of languages advise passers-by to keep their distance. And not without reason, for within the structure, visible through a thick glass panel, you see a dragon. The beast is huge, completely filling the fortress that is its home. It must weigh at least eighty tons. The dragon is asleep, but no less fearsome for all of that.

A plaque explains the dragon is maintained by the city as its primary means of defense. Should disaster ever threaten the city, you read, the dragon will be set free, destroying both the city and the army that would conquer it. The dragon is maintained by expensive blood sacrifice—primarily by hurling criminals into the dragonbunker.

The dragon is impressive, but you feel vaguely disappointed. This isn't a fearsome flying saurian; it's an overfed monster sitting in a cage.

36) You alert the warriors to your presence. The soldiers are startled when you speak, and when they turn you see they are pale with fright. They realize you could have killed them before they knew you were there. The soldiers regard you nervously as the woman in red and white approaches.

"You're the infiltrators the Kingshomers sent from their camp," she says. "I see you are surprised—my city might be losing this war, but we're not without our resources."

The woman shakes your hand as she introduces herself. "My name is Princess Myrilla," she says. "If you meant us harm you would have attacked us from behind. You don't look like Kingshomers; I choose to trust you." Myrilla barks some orders to her men in a language you don't understand. Turning back to you, she continues, "Follow me. My brother will want to speak with you."

Myrilla leads you through a secret passage into the heart of Byzanople. It's odd this girl has so abruptly taken you into her confidence. You decide to play along...if she can't make you a better offer than the Kingshomers, this is certainly an easier way into the city than storming the gate.

37) Several squat figures surround the entrance to a tunnel leading under the walls of Byzanople. A wooden palisade shields the tunnel entrance from the eyes and weapons of the city's defenders. You recognize the figures as siege engineers, and surmise they are attempting to undermine Byzanople's walls.

A short and powerful man covered with mud and sweat emerges from the tunnel. "I think we're through," he says. We had to find our way through a patch of granite, but I think we've come up against a cistern or basement wall." He looks at you expectantly. "All we need now is a pack of brave idiots to try the tunnel, find their way into the city, and open the gate for us."

38) Using your magic spell, you watch in wonder as color flows back into the frozen dwarves. The chamber is filled with a noise uncomfortably like the popping of popcorn as the dwarves return to life, their joints made stiff from ages of disuse. Before long, the entire clan is restored to life. The dwarves give you the once-over.

39) You find a hidden cove. There's a dock house by the water, and beside it you can see several small ships tied up to the dock. You must pass through the dock house to get to the boats. To your right is a small wayside shrine to some divinity or another. The cove is very quiet, aside from the lapping of the waves and the rhythmic creaking of the boats tugging at their ropes. It's hard to tell if this place is inhabited or not.

40) A wave of fetid humidity strikes you like a slap in the face when you open the door to this room. This place must be under an enchantment. Within the room is exactly reproduced a hot and swampy environment not unlike the Isle of Quag. The floor is a deep and bubbling mud bog, wide-leaf palms grow here and there, and in the underbrush you think you see small reptiles warming themselves on hot rocks. A most unusual sight to find in a dungeon....all the comforts of home (if you're a reptile).

41) The pirates are friendly enough when you pay them their gold. They offer you a seat and serve you a brutal meal of calamari and grog. "My name's Long John Ugly," the leader identifies himself. "And this here is my gal, Peg." Ugly's girl has two peg legs and no teeth, but she's by far the most presentable member of this motley crew.

You converse with Ugly and his band for several hours. Ugly used to be a sailor in the Tarsian navy. He explains Tars was a minor city on the isle of Forlorn, and that it was reduced to ruins in the early days of the war with Kingshome. "These ain't good times to be a sailor, me bucko," Ugly growls, becoming increasingly maudlin as the grog does its work. "Namtar don't want folks sailing about from one island to the other. Too hard to keep people in their place that way!".

You learn Ugly's band has scratched out a living raiding along the coast, but pickings are slim. You also guess they do a bit of smuggling. Ugly is hesitant to take you out in his boat, saying the weather is wrong and the seas are too dangerous lately. When you remind him of the gold you paid, Ugly smiles and Peg shrieks with laughter.

"I didn't figure that gold covered the cost of a passage, mate!" Ugly laughs. "That was just a fee for this fine repast and for not gettin' yer throats slit." Peg whispers something in Ugly's ear. "But Peg likes ya, and I'm in a charitable mood, so I'll do ya a favor. Seein' as how ya should be dead anyway, I'm willin' to ferry ya over to the Necropolis. There's plenty of loot to be had in that place, which should suit you folks just fine." Ugly gestures over his shoulder and points toward the south wall. "The dock's on the other side of the south door. I'll meet ya out there in a minute." Ugly looks you straight in the eye as he concludes, "And I do mean the south door. You'll do as yer told if you've got any sense."

42) In this dusty and disused chamber you find what was formerly the throne of King Drake of Kingshome, the mightiest ruler of Dilmun. The throne is heaped in the corner and in poor repair. Carelessly tossed behind the throne you find Drake's ceremonial crown. Maybe it will be worth something, if there is ever a true king in Kingshome.

43) You sail through most of a day and night through thick fog. There is no moon, and the going is slow and treacherous. Several times you think you glimpse phantoms in the fog, or hear strange beasts bumping against the hull of your vessel. Just when you think you may never reach your destination, an island looms out of the murk.

The island is an irregular mass of black stone, covered in moss and green slime. Ruins of impossibly ancient design are just visible in the center of the island. Luminous eyes peer at you from dark hollows and forbidding bogs nestled along the coastline.

44) The magic paint works as advertised. Now covered with the mystic colors, the formerly ruined walls of the City of the Yellow Mud Toad stand tall and strong. You hope strong walls will be enough to hold off the growing terror you know lurks in the swamps, just a few feet away.

45) The sail to Freeport is a long one, and your supplies are barely enough to last the voyage. You sail east and away from the majority of the Dilmun islands, headed into previously unknown waters. Once free from the war-torn islands of the Dilmun interior, you are able to enjoy the natural beauty of the maritime world of Oceana.

Presently you come in sight of a glistening modern harbor sheltered in a strange coast. Your charts indicate this is Freeport, and anchor your ship at a dock.

46) Your journey takes you to the frontier known as the Eastern Isles. This area is unclaimed by any nation, and you experience no encounters with hostile maritime forces.

The Eastern Isles have a rustic quality lacking in the Dilmun Interior. Here things are unfinished and wild, and seem untouched by the corruption of the Interior. This region is the closest thing you've seen to the paradise you expected to find when you arrived in Purgatory, many months ago.

Presently you spot what seems to be a ruined city, half-submerged in the sea. You find a place to land your craft on a stretch of sand southeast of the ruins.

47) Near the bridge you find a run-down building. A sign above the door identifies the place as the 'Official Quag Visitors Information Bureau'. The building is every bit as run-down on the inside as out.

An ugly little woman with a cluster of purple eyes enthusiastically greets you. "Welcome to Quag, Isle of Luxury!" she says. "I'm so glad you're here. We don't get so much business since the war." You learn that Quag's only city—the City of the Yellow Mud Toad—is sinking into the swamp and the priests of the Yellow Mud Toad are powerless to stop it. "But it's really quite safe for travellers," the woman is hasty to add. "Quag remains an isle of wonders, and many still dream of taking the vapors!"

You judge the woman quite mad. Saying goodbye, you depart.

48) A wall of rock stands athwart your path. Massive bronze doors guard a way through the rock; fearsome beasts guard the way to the door.

Two creatures guard the way through the rock. They are half scorpion and half dragon, but in some ways they look like men. Their eyes glow with balesome fury. They glow with an inner light, bathing the ground at their feet in glory. They appear to be a man and a woman, and thus doubly dangerous for the bond they must share.

49) After a few hours of cautious work, you're able to lash an appropriate rock to the broken pick handle with the laces you received from the dying man. The result is a serviceable if makeshift hammer. The hammer probably isn't worth much as a weapon, but it might hold up long enough to break the chains that bind you.

50) The door closed behind you with an ominous sound evoking the finality of the tomb. The door and wall from the bridge must have been sound proofed, for no sooner do you emerge from the bridge than a mad chorus of howls assails your ears. Insane screaming seems to spring from every direction, although you cannot see the source of the noise. It's enough to drive a person mad!

51) You walk beside a clean and stylish harbor. Although you are near the sea, this place has none of the stink associated with Oceana's coastal places...either Freeport is not sinking, or the port is engineered such that seepage is not the problem here that it is elsewhere in the world.

The construction here is simple but attractive. There's rustic feeling associated with the unfinished wood railings, foliage, and crisp scent to the air. The people of this place are dressed in effective leather and cloth, and seem healthy and energetic. Everyone is armed, and you judge the citizens of this place know how to defend themselves. You are greeted warmly as you approach, but the citizens of Freeport do not tarry to speak. Everyone seems engaged in a mission of great industry.

52) To the south is a little island in the harbor. Standing in the center of the island is an anvil; plunged to the hilt within the anvil is a brilliantly gleaming magic sword. There seems no way to the island...the water here seethes and boils with magical energy. It doesn't take much imagination to surmise a swim to the island would be fatal.

A Freeport citizen notices your interest in the island. "That is the Sword of Freedom," he says. "Many years ago, the great hero Roba delivered it from the Underworld. After many years of adventuring, Roba retired here and founded our city. Shortly before his death, Roba built this magical island to protect his sword."

The citizen is silent for a moment before continuing. "Legend says that so long as the sword remains in the anvil, no harm can come to Freeport, " he says. "At the same time, Roba warned a time would come of great strife on Oceana. He said a champion would appear one day to claim the sword. He who wields the Sword of Freedom will quell the strife in Oceana, but at the same time will doom our city. Such is the sacrifice we must someday make."

The citizen wishes you well and leaves. The Sword of Freedom is just out of your reach. It seems to taunt you. How to get it? How to get it...?

53) In this cell you find a weak young man dressed in soiled motley. "Good evening ladies and germs, it's good to be back at the palace," he says as you enter his cell. "A funny thing happened to me on the way to the dungeon." The poor man was obviously a court jester. "I ran into Sir Loin of Pork this afternoon—he said he was about to become Baron of Greymatter." This guy really stinks. If wiser men than you consigned this man to the dungeons, who are you to set him free. "I got a million of 'em," the jester says, seeming to notice you for the first time and perking up considerably. This confirms your worst fears, and you slam and lock the cell door. "Cancel the Renaissance—it looks like a reign of terror!" comes the muffled voice from behind the door.

Even Namtar has a good idea now and then.

54) "Thanks for putting me back together—I feel swell!" Lanac'toor grins. "I was a little nervous when you put my arms on backwards, but I guess I'll get used to it. Having my elbows bend the wrong way will make it easier for me to scratch my back!"

55) A yawning chasm stretches before you. A violent gust of hot wind rises from the chasm...the void must reach to the very roots of the world, below even the Underworld. Out of the chasm, starting an unknowable distance beneath you and stretching as far as the eye can see, you view a vomitous mass of irregular black stone. The tower stands piled atop itself and is at once designed and chaotic...from one angle it looks like a sorcerer's stronghold, while from another it seems like the exposed spine of a fantastic beast. Perhaps it is not really there at all. More likely it exists in more than one dimension at the same time, and is thus difficult to see in its entirety.

One thing is certain...this tower has nothing to do with god, or salvation, or pilgrims. This is a tower of Evil. This is the Tower of Namtar!

56) A tall and powerfully built man with a greenish complexion greets you when you enter the building. "I am Tarkas, first citizen of Tars," he says. You learn that he and his fellow officers fled here to Freeport when their home city of Tars was destroyed by the legions of Kingshome. Tars was previously the foremost city of the Isle of Forelorn. Now Tars is a sad ruin, while Purgatory passes for the isle's only city. If you explore the ruins of Tars, Tarkas says, be sure to seek the hidden chambers beneath the city—they might still contain fabulous treasures.

Tarkas is bitter when he recalls the ruin of his city. "We were betrayed," he says. "We relied on our dragon to defend us. We didn't dream Kingshome would be so bold to assault us when our dragon was healthy and awake. When they lay siege to our city, we released our dragon...and the beast did nothing! A hundred years of blood sacrifice to that terrible dragon, and what good did it do us in our hour of need?"

Tarkas grows animated as he speaks, accidentally smashing a table as he excitedly flails his arms. "I tell you, Namtar found a way to usurp control of our dragon! Since Namtar rose Kingshome against all of Dilmun, dragons have all but vanished! Namtar controls them somehow...but no man can control the saurians without paying a terrible price. If someone could learn what he's done with the dragons—and learn how to wrest their control from Namtar...then Kingshome would learn a thing or two!!"

57) This simple hall serves as the community meeting place for the citizens of Freeport. You are greeted by minor city officials who welcome you to their town and eagerly ask you for information of the war in Dilmun. "These are dark days," the official says. "Soon Kingshome will control all of Dilmun, then Namtar will cast his evil gaze toward the Eastern Isle and our fair city."

The official scratches his head. "It's odd," he says. "My father was an advisor to the court of King Drake at Kingshome. He said Drake was a peaceful old man. His son, Jordan of Byzanople, was a regular firebrand...but not Drake. Why suddenly make war on his neighbors? It doesn't make any sense...Namtar must have poisoned him." The official shrugs. "I wonder if something's happened to him. King Drake hadn't been seen in public for over a year when I was last in Phoebus, and that was some time ago. Maybe something happened to him."

58) After a long wait, you shuffle onto the block with a host of other unfortunates. You are in better shape than the poor wretches that surround you, and your group is instantly the subject of spirited bidding. You shudder as you are sold to a man with a fat neck for more gold than you are likely to see in a lifetime.

You are led away from the slave auction and linked one to another by a continuous sequence of chains and collars. Presently your new master appears and introduces himself. "I am Master Mog," he says. "From this moment on, I am your mother, I am your father, I am your God, I am your world. I am Mog—Mog is All. Abandon all hope of freedom. You are my property, to do with as I please."

Mog leaves you to the hands of his slave bosses, who spend the next several weeks attempting to break your spirit. During this time you are loaded aboard a painfully slow cog and sail to Master Mog's estate. You are afforded a brief glimpse of Mog's luxurious palace before you are led beneath the earth and introduced to Mog's salt mines.

Then begins a mind-numbing series of repetitious chores. You are not permitted to leave the mines. You work, sleep, and eat in the same series of identical tunnels, never permitted to see the sun.

59) You are admitted to the camp and immediately pressed into service. The army makes no attempt to provision or train you—it's evident they consider you a band of cutthroats, and that they like you just the way you are.

You are billeted in a siege camp located a few miles south of the walled city of Byzanople, which for months has stubbornly resisted the enlightenment of joining the unified Kingshomer Empire under Namtar and King Drake. The besieging Kingshomer army is preparing to take the city by storm. You are to be among the waves of unfortunates they wish to send over the wall. You may not take kindly to this idea, but there are many more of them than there are of you, and this is no opportunity to desert.

60) These cramped quarters serve as home for Mog's unfortunate slaves. Men sleep fitfully on the cold rock floor, encumbered by the stout chains that bind them one to another. An examination of your companions proves your chains will never be removed—some of the sleeping men are still chained to companions who have long since passed away.

61) The dying man gratefully gulps water from your cup. "You are angels," he says. "I want to die, but not alone, and certainly not thirsty!" The man wipes his mouth with his wrist. His parched lips crack and smear his wrist with blood. "Not much longer," he says with a wan smile. "When I'm gone, I want you to have these." The dying man shows you his boots. The soles are entirely worn away, but the tops are still secured by stout leather laces. "The boots aren't much good, but the laces are strong—maybe you can do something with them." The old man is abruptly seized with a coughing fit. You know the end is near. "I hope you fare better then me," he croaks.

62) The last of the guards drops dead and silence claims the mines. A ladder leads up out of the salt mines. In the dim distance you can see sunlight for the first time in uncountable hours, days, or months. Freedom is at hand. But what awaits you at the top of the shaft?

63) Several people are huddled around a fire. One of them offers you some stew which you eagerly accept—it's bland and watery, but it's the first hot food you've had in days and you eat every drop. After your meal you doze off by the fire, grateful to at last be in the company of charity and good will. When you awaken, you feel as if you've been reborn.

64) You stand before the gleaming city of Lansk. The streets are clean, the people are orderly, and while the city is walled, there is no gate. None of the busy citizens you spy carries a weapon. The city shows no sign of war or occupation. However, it does seem like a very rich place, and you can detect a faint smell of dragon in the air....

65) This guard room is occupied by several menacing men who stand when you enter. "Well...look at this," one of them sneers. "Our prisoners have 'escaped'. We have to 'recapture' them—perhaps several times." The guards begin to close in. "Remember, men, these prisoners were trying to escape...we won't be accused of beating prisoners in their cells again!"

66) This is Phoebus' incredible Temple of the Sun, renown all across the world of Oceana. The sun's warm rays shine into an open atrium, bathing the broad leaves of a variety of exotic heliotropic plants. Acolytes of the temple are busy about on mysterious tasks. The floor is inscribed with a gold design depicting the motion of Oceana and her sister planets. From some unseen chamber you hear the soothing sound of running water.

A gold curtain swings aside and a short, swarthy man enters the chamber. He is dressed in blue robes inscribed with stars and moons, and wears a pointed cap. It seems the man very much wants to look like a wizard, but has no idea of what wizards actually look like.

"I am Mystalvision, High Priest of the Temple of the Sun," says the wizard in a comically high and wet voice. "You are to be commended for making it this far. I don't care that you cracked out of Purgatory, but your behavior since entering my city has been intolerable." Mystalvision snaps his fingers, and several cruel gentlemen dressed all in black appear out of nowhere. "Namtar's Stosstrupen would like to ask you some questions," Mystalvision sneers. "I should ask you to come along quietly, but it will be more fun to do this the hard way."

67) This is an open-air slave market, filled with the cry of fleshmongers and the laughter of a perfumed crowd. Here men and women are for sale—people such as yourselves—to the jaded residents of the Dilmun interior.

From the gate of the slave market you watch as several young men are auctioned off. They seem less healthy than yourselves—maybe they've been in the city longer than you. It seems a sad way out of this place, to make yourself a slave...but isn't anything better than a life of misery and slow death in the streets of Purgatory?

You scan the crowd, anxious to measure the character of citizens of the Dilmun interior. Their faces seem cruel and aristocratic, with a faint hint of the more-than-human. Here and there you spot a face that seems kinder than most, but if you were on the block, what guarantee would you have of receiving a kind master? Could you truly live with yourself as a slave?

There is a long line of lost souls waiting for the auction block. Nothing will stop you should you decide to join them.

68) The door to this hut is open, and from within you hear someone singing. Entering the hut, you see a simple room...a pile of straw serves as a bed, while a candle burns on a large rock that passes as a table. Behind the rock you see a sad man who seems very old. His eyes are empty sockets and both his hands have been amputated at the wrist. You wonder why a blind man burns candles when he's alone.

The man stops singing and swings his head in your direction when you enter. "You must be the outsiders everyone's so excited about," he says with a firm voice. "I can smell Purgatory on you. Please come in. I'd like to see some new faces...provided I could see."

You learn the man's name is Carson. He was a sorcerer at the Temple of the Sun, in Phoebus. "That was before Namtar rose from the Pit," says Carson, pausing to spit. "Damn Underworld types should stay in their own world."

You talk with Carson well into the evening, pumping him for information. You learn that Namtar is either a demon or a man—Carson seems to use the terms interchangeably. About a year ago Namtar appeared at the court of King Drake in Kingshome, and was welcomed as the court magician. Within a year, Kingshome had mobilized and began making war on its neighbors. At the same time, Namtar announced a general ban on magic, using his secret police—the Stosstrupen—to enforce the ban. A great magical war ensued, which Namtar and the Stosstrupen won handily.

"Now sorcery is all but dead in Dilmun," Carson continues. "Take a look at me. Ten years learning Sun Magic and it leads to this! All the old Masters are gone...Lanac'toor was finally driven over the edge and shattered into a score of pieces; Zaton exiled to the deep wilderness; and Mystalvision..." Carson is silent for a long time, then says, "I can't prove it, but I always thought Mystalvision was wrapped up with Namtar. He's the High Priest at the Temple of the Sun. Our Order fell to Namtar so quickly...we must have been betrayed. Beware of Mystalvision!"

You talk with Carson late into the night, but learn little else of value. He is either unwilling or unable to teach you any magic. Heeding his advice, you take your leave of the old man.

69) When no one is looking, you crawl into an open sack filled with disgustingly fresh corpses. You lay still as the sack is crudely sewed shut. The darkness of the tomb descends upon you as the bag is closed.

None too gently, the entire sack is heaved onto the backs of the slaves. Dead arms embrace you, long fingernails claw at your hair, rotting grave mould seems to penetrate your body. There is a lurch and a rasp as the bag clears the wall, and then you fall.

Your flesh crawls with anticipation. Will you meet your end, smashed to death with a host of corpses on some unseen rocky spire? Or will you splash into the warm waters of Oceana, at long last free from the stinking hell of Purgatory?

You splash. You sink. You struggle. At last you win free of the sack, and the dead hands that drag at you seemingly resentful of the life you display. Lungs bursting, you break from the water at the base of the harbor wall, and quickly clamber aboard some debris you find floating close by and strike out for shore.

70) Mighty oaks intertwine above your head to form a living gateway to this enchanted forest. A fresh coat of sparking dew lays over everything, lending a fantastic quality to the scene. The ground is covered with an inviting blanket of green moss. Faerie lights glimmer from within the boles of dark yet pleasant trees. This is a magical place.

71) Much to the garrison's dismay, the gates of Byzanople prove little obstacle for you. The Kingshomer army streams through the open gate and makes short work of the outnumbered city garrison. Byzanople has fallen.

After putting the garrison to the sword, the victorious Kingshomer soldiers gleefully get down to some serious pillaging. Buck Ironhead, the commander of the Kingshomer siege camp, appears from the chaos. "I've got to hand it to you," he says, "you really did a job on these Byzanople jerks! Now Namtar's control of Dilmun is complete. I'm sure the Beast From The Pit will want to thank you personally." Ironhead smiles when you remind him of your bargain. "I haven't forgotten, I assure you...but seeing as how you threw in with me so easily, I doubt you have any real sense of honor. I wouldn't trust you clowns as far as I could throw you!" Buck stands back as several of his soldiers gather around. "Put these traitors in irons!" he snarls.

The guards close in. It's an epic fight, but no heroes can long withstand sheer weight of numbers. Everything goes black as the last of your party falls to the dust.

72) This shrine is formed from rocks and wood and moss—it seems a profoundly natural thing, more an outgrowth of this enchanted wood than a thing built by man. The divinity worshiped here is none you recognize, but the feeling of the place is one of harmony with nature.

Upon closer inspection, you see dried bloodstains on the rock. The stains are not large—this shrine is not used for sacrifice—but perhaps its resident god is awakened by a token gift of life.

73) This hidden glade is charged with magical energy. The rocks marking this clearing form a ring of deliberately-placed standing stones, the focus of which is upon the earth where you now stand. You feel power rushing from the roots of the earth and into your soul. Enkidu himself stands and regards you.

74) Old Jack's eyes grow bright when you show him the signet ring. "His majesty...?" Jack whispers. You sadly shake your head, indicating Drake is dead. Tears form in Jack's eyes as he sighs. "Me poor, poor king...I knew ye'd come to no good with that demon Namtar!"

After showing him your ring, Jack treats you like an honored guest, forgiving all your misdeeds in the forest. "I'm a King's man, ye got ta believe that," he says. "I love me King an' I never disobeyed him. But I never like the looks o' that Namtar—he's a very devil, he is! It must have been 'im wot killed old Drake." Old Jack pauses to spit. "Someone's got to bring Namtar down, and clear the way for young Prince Jordan to take the throne. You've got the ring, so you're it!"

Old Jack solemnly hands you his bow. "This here's me bow, I call her Nevermiss! Drake gave her to me when we were both boys, and she's never failed me. Now I give her to you, to shoot down that foul Namtar!" Jack is hesitant to release the bow, and even as you hold it his eyes linger on the weapon. "She's like a lady, she is...you treat her kind. You treat her kind."

Jack is abruptly eager to leave. He refuses to leave the forest, saying it's his only home. He wishes you all good luck and melts into the woods.

He will never be seen again.

75) After what seems an eternity, you locate the source of the screaming. Nearly mad yourselves, you find a city of the mad squatting on a desolate shore. Feeble huts made of driftwood and debris huddle together in a feeble pile. White-haired loons with wild eyes stumble to and fro, mumbling to themselves or shrieking like cats. Crazed citizens of the place wrestle with one another, seeming like writhing human serpents. It's a madhouse, and the inmates are running the asylum.

76) A mad artist inscribes designs on the sandy floor of his hut. "I don't have to do this, you know," he says as you enter. It's uncertain if he's talking to you, or if you walk in on him while he was talking to himself. "I can make a good living as a tattoo artist!" he continues. "But I will draw on you, mother earth, because everyone else draws from you. You. Who. Moo. Moo?"

The artist jumps up and bounds about the hut. "Moo! Moo!" he howls. "Don't you see? It's all so clear. At last! At last!" The poor man rushes past you and is quickly lost in the village of the lost.

77) Amid the ruins you come upon a remarkable sight. A bonfire illuminates a shattered city square. Scores of people cavort about the fire——this is the greatest gathering of people you've seen since arriving in Purgatory.

The occupants of the square constitute a cross-section of Purgatory's citizenry. Blind beggars, mad poets, dog-faced children, and drunken priests swarm about the fire like moths to a flame; drinking, singing, loving, bleeding, brawling. Above them all, seated on a rude throne of stacked masonry, you see the man you surmise to be the king of this place. If he is a king, he is a king of thieves.

Astounded by this strange sight, you do not notice until it is too late a score of scoundrels sneaking up on you. Surrounded by rogues, you are urged toward the fire, where you come under the gaze of the figure on the throne. "Outlanders!," the king roars, teetering atop his perilous perch. "You've strayed far from your homes, little does and kittens. This is the Court of Miracles, gathered to pay homage to the King of Purgatory..." the king pauses, awaiting the proper moment before continuing, "...me, Clopin Trouillefou!

78) A group of ragged unfortunates sun themselves on this dismal coastline. They sit in folding beach chairs, some beneath the shade of colorful beach parasols. All the men and women are dressed in rags. Few have teeth; fewer still have a proper tan. The day is cold and grey.

"Hail Namtar!" a woman cries. "Great is he to take such care of us! What have we to want for?" A one-armed young man elbows you in the ribs, and says with a sidelong wink, "Quite a little resort we got here, wouldn't you say? Boy, that Namtar sure is a swell egg!" "This is a ritzy place—nothing less than a king retired here!" cackles another. Similar comments come at every turn. You find this place is called Toxic Beach, and these poor lunatics think it's some sort of beach resort to which they've been sent as reward for faithful service to Namtar.

A few bloated dead rats have washed up on the bleached coastline. An odd tumble of rocks marks the north end of the shore. The rocks are covered with debris, as if the remains of a shipwreck have washed up here.

79) There is a deep rumbling as storm clouds gather. Abruptly rain begins to fall in relentless sheets, threatening to flood the stone, the forest, the entire world.

A supernatural hush falls over the glade. Even the pelting rain seems to fall silent. Suddenly you are surrounded by animals—bears, dogs, deer, ducks, and even a penguin. You turn and see still more animals crowding outside the door to the shrine. You see a lion lay down beside a lamb. The animals are waiting for something.

Above the stone appears the ghost of Zaton. The ghost speaks. "My friends, I am forever in your debt for liberating my soul. By restoring me to the world, the world restores itself. The natural order is reestablished. Man and beast may again live in harmony."

The animals begin to excitedly roar, bark, and bray. "My time in this world is done," Zaton says. "But for you brave adventurers the task is just beginning. Namtar is evil! He must be destroyed! To you I grant the boon of knowledge...use it well!"

80) The center post of these communal huts shelters a secret chamber. A skeleton dressed in the royal colors of Kingshome sits on a makeshift throne. Whoever this was, he's been dead a long time. A royal signet ring gleams on one skeletal finger. The ring seems both valuable and important.

81) A dwarf springs up as you enter the room. He eagerly scans your party, then collapses in disappointment. "No dwarves," he weeps. "Never are there any dwarves. Poor Josephina is all alone." The dwarf has a woman's name, but it's bearded and it smells and...well, no matter, Josephina is probably just as crazy as everyone else in this silly town.

"The kingdom is broken," cries Josephina. "The great clanhall is sealed, and all the dwarves slumber in the vaults. Namtar stole the eyes from our icon and hurled them into the sea. Every day I search the coast, but never do I find the eyes." Josephina continues to weep, hardly aware of your presence.

82) Nisir, the Mountain of Salvation, rises above you to an impossibly great height, seeming to rip the sky. Although it is daytime, when you look up you can see stars near where you guess the summit of the mighty mountain must be. It seems to you the mountain must push through the very atmosphere of Oceana to produce such a sight.

Ahead of you, a long line of pilgrims slowly files past the sole gate leading from the harbor.

83) A prisoner lies babbling in the corner . "A secret tunnel connects this prison to the Nisir", he says. "When you find the swamp within the mountain, know you are near Namtar!"

84) The pilgrims stop one-by-one to kneel before this elaborate shrine before continuing. The shrine depicts the image of the Universal God, a faceless deity that looks in all directions at once, and raises its arms to encompass both earth, heaven, and underworld. You note with relief that not even Namtar has dared to undermine the basic faith of Oceana.

The pilgrims evidently expect enlightenment and salvation to result from their visit to Nisir. You expect salvation of a different kind—the sort that can come only from sending Namtar to his doom.

85) It is several days' sail to Nisir, the Mountain of Salvation, but the route is easy to follow. The great mountain Nisir seems to rise from the roots of Oceana and reach to the heavens—it is easily the tallest mountain on the planet, and you are in sight of your destination for most of the journey.

The harbor at Nisir is clogged with pilgrim's vessels. Several hundred robed figures crowd the docks, slowly passing through the harbor's only exit into the interior. The great mountain of Nisir looms above you, stern and forbidding. You sense a moment of destiny is at hand.

86) You are pressed into service and sent directly to the front. The army makes no attempt to provision or train you—it's evident they consider you a band of cutthroats, and that they like you just the way you are.

A troop ship conveys you to King's Island, where the walled city of Byzanople stubbornly resists the enlightenment of joining the unified Kingshomer Empire under Namtar and King Drake. Byzanople has been under siege for several months, and the besieging Kingshomer army is preparing to take the city by storm. You are to be among the waves of unfortunates they wish to send over the wall. You may not take kindly to this idea, but there are many more of them than there are of you, and this is no opportunity to desert.

You are billeted in a siege camp located a few miles south of the actual siege.

87) Directly ahead you see the semi-permanent camp of the Kingshomer campaign army. The army occupies a valley between two mountain peaks. A wooden palisade has been erected across the mouth of the valley, providing the camp with a measure of protection against raiders from the south.

There is no evidence of an enemy army anywhere in the area. From the looks of the camp, it seems likely this is a base from which the Kingshomer army is besieging an enemy fortress or city.

Several guards lounge before the entrance to the camp. They eye you with suspicion.

88) Within this building you find a group of old men gathered around a table. They're playing dice and speaking rapidly to each other in a dialect you can barely understand. You are noticed and welcomed into the game.

The men play for the joy of it. There's a complicated wagering scheme involved, but no money ever changes hands, and the men don't seem to care if you're rich or destitute. After a while, you begin to make sense of their speech.

It seems these men are residents of the Dilmun interior, displaced to this island of outlanders by war and oppression. From them you learn a little of recent events in Dilmun. The Dilmun interior consists of several large islands, each of which is dominated by an autonomous city-state. Warfare has been frequent between the rival cities, but no single nation has ever been able to rule all the others. Each city keeps a dragon captive somewhere within its walls—if total disaster ever threatens, the dragon will be let loose. This would almost certainly lead to the destruction of both sides, but it serves as a deterrent to conquest.

Recently, the city of Kingshome launched a bid for empire. Kingshome's imperialism was aided by a sorcerer—Namtar, the Beast From the Pit. Thanks to Namtar, all magical opposition was quickly overwhelmed, and Kingshome made rapid gains. For some unknown reason, the conquered cities never launched their dragons against Kingshome.

The youngest of the men arrived at the camp just a few months ago. So far as he knows, nearly all of Dilmun's cities have been conquered or lay in ruins. The city of Byzanople on the King's Isle remains free, although it has been under siege for several months. He also mentions a city called Freeport in the Eastern Isles, but his companions scoff when he does, saying Freeport is more myth than reality. Nevertheless, the young man asserts he'll find Freeport someday—as soon as he can find a ship bound for the Eastern Isles. Since the war, very few ships travel the interior waterways, and it has become increasingly difficult to use Dilmun's many bridges.

89) You restrain the hunchback and prevent him from hurling the prisoner into the pit. Tears flow from the hunchback's already swollen eyes. "Buth Gethtrude must eat!" he mumbles. The dragon's thrashing intensifies, and the great beast begins beating its head against the side of its pit, setting up a great rumbling through the dungeon. "Now thuh manue hath hit thuth windmill!" the hunchback howls, trying to flee down the narrow causeway to the edge of the pit. He doesn't make it...with a great booming, the dragon lurches from from his chains, bumping against the platform on which you stand. The hunchback is hurled screaming into the maw of the dragon...but now that that beast is free of its chains, no mere morsel can satisfy it!

You flee the scene as the dragon smashes at the supports of the dungeon, and in so doing at the foundation of the entire city of Phoebus. You find a crazy path to the surface uncovered by the dragon's rage. You flee the vicinity of the city and watch from a nearby hill as the dragon claws its way to the surface. Before long, Phoebus is a flaming ruin as the dragon takes its terrible toll. The city destroyed, the dragon slowly rises into the sky, and flaps off to the east.

90) This is the office of the supreme commander of the campaign army of Kingshome. General Buck Ironhead regards you from behind his desk. Ironhead is a frightening sight. His arms are a mass of scar tissue from a sequence of wounds too tedious to list. His face shows no mirth. His hands continually clench and unclench. His head is completely flat—you could balance an egg on it.

"It's about time ya goldbricks showed up!" Buck snarls. "What do ya think this is—a soggin' country club?? Ain't ya ever heard of reporting to yer commandin' officer??" Buck doesn't wait for a reply. "Now, I know you clowns are a pack of liberal adventurers. You don't like Namtar, you don't like the army—kid's today!! Ungrateful whelps! Well, I don't care about any of that. I'm here to give you a second chance."

Buck comes out from behind his desk and hobbles around his office as he continues. "You're in the army whether you like it or not, so you might as well do this the easy way. You may think you've got this thing licked, but I know damn well you can't tell your elbow from a dragon's blowhole. You keep your nose clean and serve with some distinction at the front, and I'll do what I can about gettin' you a full pardon. Namtar's a megalomaniac, but he's also a businessman, and he needs creeps like you!"

Buck dismisses you. "This is yer only chance. Namtar's gonna control everything sooner or later, so you might as well join the winning side. Namtar's promised a kinder and gentler Oceana, but he can't get on with it until guys like you toe the line.

"Get outta here!!"

91} Some bandits were evidently holed up here. Their campfire is still warm. Evidently they were eating a meal when you showed up, as half-finished bowls of gruel stand all around the fire.

They weren't very good bandits, or maybe they hadn't been at it for long. There isn't much loot to be had in this camp. Maybe they were adventurers such as yourselves, turned to crime in these hard times.

92} The magnificent stag lays dead. As you kneel beside your kill, the shaft of an arrow buries itself to the feathers in the sod between your feet. You look up and see an old but very dangerous-looking man aiming yet another arrow at you.

"This is the private preserve of King Drake," the old man says. "An' you have been poachin'." He glances over your party before continuing. "These bein' hard times, I imagine ye gots to eat...but that was a prize animal ye just killed, and I've gots to do me job."

The man keeps his bow half-cocked and watches you closely. He seems to be waiting for you to make the first move. Maybe it would be worth winning his trust.

93} "BRAAAAAP!" Nergal is crude. "That was delicious...I will hallucinate later, and imagine Irkalla working for a living." Nergal shifts his ponderous mass on his throne, leans forward, and leers. "And now you will serve Nergal!"

With impossible speed, Nergal grabs the volunteer with both slimy hands. His jaw seems to drop down to his belt as the black maw of his mouth is exposed. He quickly slips the volunteer's head into his mouth, and clenches his jaw with a sickening crunch. The volunteer's body stiffens, then goes limp, collapsing to the ground without a head.

All is silent. Nergal smiles.

94} You recall learning of waters like this during your mystic studies. The pool of water ahead fits the description of Apsu Waters...waters of the world ocean that underlies the surface of Oceana. Apsu Waters are coterminous with the world of Oceana, the mystical Magan Underworld, and dark dimensions where gods and devils reside.

95} The slave boss is relentless. He offers you not a moment's rest, nor a drop of water, or even a scrap of bread. All that matters is that the tunnel be completed. No single man or beast may stand in the way of the project. Night and day you are driven to finish your task, with the sharp lash of the whip on your back, and the laughter of the cruel slave boss ringing in your ears.

96} An old man leaps to his feet and lunges for his bow when you enter the shack. "Glory be—ye got past me snare!!", he exclaims. "That's quite a feat, but it still don't do to go bargin' in on honest folks without so much as a knock!"

"Me name is Old Jack," he continues. "I'm the gamewarden hereabouts." Jack keeps his bow half-cocked and watches you closely. He seems to be waiting for you to make the first move. Maybe it would be worth winning his trust.

97} The long line of white-robed pilgrims ends at this rocky shrine. One by one the pilgrims pass before a huge and powerful image of the Universal God. There are no guards here. None are required. The God keeps its own order beneath its own roof.

Looking up into the faceless face of the god, you feel the hand of destiny upon you. Namtar has not yet attempted to supplant Oceana's primary religion...but can that day be far away? The gods risk disaster when they come to the world in person—they must work through champions to see their will is done. The Universal God seems to need a champion, a legendary hero to serve the cause of Freedom. Roba of Freeport was such a hero. Will you be another?

The God requires a sign.

98) You climb the Mountain of Salvation for several hours, but the summit seems to draw no closer. Several pilgrims drop from exhaustion along the path...the road to salvation is not for the weak of heart.

But a fraction of the way up the mountain, the path abruptly cuts into the rock. A level plain has been cleared in the side of the mountain. This is evidently the place to which the pilgrims travel. Turning around, you look out at the world of Oceana from your lofty perch on the world's highest mountain. To your alarm, you see you have long since risen above even the highest clouds. The sky is purple and strange stars twinkle—the huge bloated mass of the sun fully fills half the sky. Truly, this place is close to God.

99) In this stuffy bedroom you find a journal. From it you determine the master of this house was a man named Mog, a rich aristocrat who made his fortune in the mining business. By all accounts he was a crude man—wealthy but uncultured—who fancied himself an artist. The journal is largely given over to a remarkably frank account of Mog's failure as an artist.

Mog admits to experimenting with alchemy in pursuit of his art. At one point he confesses using a potion to transform living flesh into stone, but the artistic results were not satisfactory.

Near the end of the journal Mog mentions "acquiring an apprentice" by supernatural means. It seems this apprentice was originally supposed to assist Mog in his art. Toward the end of the journal, Mog admits the apprentice has begun producing incredible works of art which Mog displays in his garden and calls his own. Mog hints that the apprentice demands a terrible price for his art, and that he fears him. It is possible the apprentice might not be human.

100) Off the beaten path you find this is a temple to the Magan Underworld. This seems a considerably older place than the other structures on this plateau. The Underworld was before there was a was, and doubtless it will still thrive when all of Oceana has long since burned off into the void.

101) You receive a note with your feeble meal for the day:

> 'I am Berengaria, Acolyte of the Temple of the Sun. Mystalvision has gone mad. He punishes me and the others for no reason. He has been corrupted by Namtar.
>
> 'We of the Sun serve justice; you must believe that. Mystalvision has brought dishonor to our Order. These are dark times. You have been unfairly imprisoned.
>
> 'I have unlocked your door, and made certain the jailor is drunk. If you are cautious, you should be able to sneak past him and escape. The jailor's room adjoins the cell block. Look for the secret door in the south wall of the jailor's room—beyond is a passage that leads to people who will help you. I regret I cannot give you a weapon...just doing this much has placed me in great jeopardy.
>
> 'Should you escape, meet me at the Icarian Triumph tavern in the northeast quarter of the city. I'll have something for you.
>
> "For justice and the Sun, I remain your friend—
>
> —Berengaria'

102) This is the jailor's room. The fat jailor snores in a drunken slumber. He's slumped over his table, but there is a rope tied to his hand, and a bell tied to his rope. Should he stir, the bell will ring, possibly summoning guards. The jailor is asleep, and doubtless very drunk, but turn-keys are notoriously light sleepers.

103) These are the private chambers of the master of the house. The curtains are drawn across the windows permitting little light to enter the room. In the murk, you can see that this room, like the others in the house, is strangely devoid of wall hangings...and that no mirrors are present.

The Master is in, sitting in his favorite chair. He wears the garb of an artist—specifically of a sculptor...and he wants you to be his next masterpiece!

104) In the dark shadows of the dungeon you find a pit, at the bottom of which is a frothing dragon. The beast is constrained by a series of chains, but it seems to you the saurian could hardly be bound by such puny restraints.

Suspended above the center of the pit is a wooden platform, on which a demented hunchback struggles with a bound prisoner. The hunchback is about to push the prisoner into the pit, evidently intending him as a sacrifice to the dragon. The prisoner struggles as best as he is able, but his hands are tied behind his back, and he is weakened from long captivity. The dragon thrashes back and forth, impatient to receive its meal.

105) There are evident signs this chamber was formerly the lair of a beast or large animal. A pile of straw in the corner indicates where a large creature could have slept. The walls scraped with claw marks, and the room is pervaded by an unpleasant odor. The room makes you feel instinctively uneasy.

106) This torture chamber is a vision of misery. The walls are lined with chains for securing prisoners in place; the center of the room is occupied by racks, iron maidens, a fire pit, and other horrible instruments. In the corner is a hole into which are hurled the grisly remains of stubborn heretics.

A dying druid is stretched on the rack. You have rescued him from his torture...at the same time, it is evident he will soon die. There is nothing you can do to save his life, but perhaps you can ease his final moments?

107) This tower chamber is in very ill repair. The supports are sinking, and half the floor is flooded with inky black water. The contents of innumerable vials and potions are emptied on the floor alongside the smashed vials that formerly contained them. What was once a great magical library has been destroyed by fire and water damage.

Amid a pile of debris you find the fragments of a journal. Much of it is in some magic language you can't understand, but a small part is legible. The journal is dated prior to the destruction of the City of the Yellow Mud Toad. You surmise the journal was maintained by Lanac'toor.

'The chicken remains animate, not that it matters any longer. That pinhead Mystalvision has changed the rules again. Where will I find a vole in this weather?...Have resumed expansion of my tower's basement, using Soften Stone and Create Wall spells to clear rock, but this whole damn building is sinking. I keep running into pockets of water. Furthermore, I uncovered an entrance to Magan, and all manner of berserk Underworld denizens are running amok in my tunnels...The hell of it is that I've lost my spectacles that Utnapishtim the Faraway gave me. I'll never see the entrance to the College of Magic without them. They're buried somewhere in the rock. I don't know if I can locate them at this late date, with Namtar's thugs loose and my name on the hit list. I should prepare the city for defense, but I haven't done my laundry in weeks, and it's beginning to smell.'

Such are the concerns of sorcerers.

108) You are led to a secret throne room beneath the city of Byzanople. There Prince Jordan and several advisors huddle around a map in a council of war. Jordan is stunned when he sees his sister has brought you into the heart of his defenses. Jordan's private guards tense as they lock eyes with you.

Prince Jordan recovers his composure and listens with interest to his sister's story. He is very interested to learn you are infiltrators recently pressed into service with the Kingshomer army. "You are not native to Dilmun, I can see that," Jordan says. "This isn't your war. No Outlander reaches the interior without going through Purgatory...and Purgatory is administered by Kingshome. I know because my sister was formerly Governor of Purgatory."

Jordan invites you to sit and offers you wine. "My father is King Drake of Kingshome," Jordan says. "I haven't seen my father in over a year—not since Namtar rose from the Pit. My father is a peaceful man, and he loves his children...but he has recently dismissed my sister from her post at Purgatory, and then layed siege to me here at Byzanople. My father loves me and the succession is not disputed. I want to see my father die in bed—I do not covet his throne. There is no reason for the King to make war on me. It must be Namtar's doing.

"My father is not perfect, but it was never his way to imprison Outlanders for no reason. Namtar has stolen my father from me; he has robbed you of your dignity. He is our common enemy. I make you an offer—reject Kingshome and join me in my struggle against Namtar. When my father is restored to the throne, I will see you are richly rewarded."

109) Jordan smiles. He leads you to the map he and his men were examining. You recognize it as a plan of the Kingshomer siege camp. Jordan pumps you for information concerning the camp and the size of the force stationed there.

"We'll attack them tonight," Jordan decides. "There is a secret way from the citadel to the enemy camp—we will take them by surprise." Jordan looks at you as he continues, "Feel free to explore the city until we are ready to leave."

110) "The time has come," Prince Jordan says as he meets you on the stairs. Together with several of Prince Jordan's best fighters, you sneak away from Byzanople through a secret passage. Only a skeleton garrison is left behind—you realize Jordan is throwing everything into this attack.

Using a local guide, you pick your way through the mountains surrounding the Kingshomer siege camp. The guide seems to lead you through solid rock at times, and you soon have little idea of where you are. Suddenly, from ahead, you hear Buck Ironhead bellow orders to a pack of new "recruits". The battle is about to begin!

111) You enter the dusty and perhaps forgotten ancestral crypt of Byzanople. The murky vault stretches off into the darkness, harboring the remains of several generations of royalty. Perhaps they were buried with treasure...?

If you listen, you think you can hear a faint rattle of chains, and the raspy sound of a corpse drawing breath.

112) Deep beneath the live volcano, you find the dragon hatchery. Here fantastic riches are free for the taking. Your perilous journey across the northern desert, so terrible in its undertaking, at last seems worthwhile.

113) The priests gratefully accept your knowledge and help in restoring the temple. "Truly you are people of the Toad," says a priest. "Please accept these boots as our gift." You are provided with several sets of oversized golden boots. The boots are fashioned so as to resemble the flipper feet of a toad. It will be difficult to walk wearing such thing. "The owner of Magic Golden Toad Boots can leap great distances!" the priest says with pride.

114) In the darkest heart of this palace of the dead you find an incredible sight...the court of Nergal, consort to Irkalla and King of the Underworld. The bloated white mass of Nergal slouches on a throne of skulls, attended by a score of pallid goblins. Worms squirm in his hair, bats nestle in his loins, and rodents peer at you from within Nergal's mouth. About his neck, on a silver chain, you see a large and ornate key.

"Topsiders...in my Court!" Nergal roars. "Bad enough I am in exile without fool clodhoppers barging in on me. Goblins! Ghoulies! Bring them here!!"

115) "Haw! Most entertaining," Nergal laughs. The hideous god raises one fist and his court of freaks—though you just hacked them to pieces—lurch to their feet like puppets on invisible strings. The goblins and ghoulies look ready to fight again...it's evident the undead monsters will eventually wear you down. "You have entertained me...but you must also feed Nergal and serve Nergal before you can ask a boon of Nergal. That is the law!"

Negal looks at you expectantly. A ghoul titters.

116) Just as advertised by the blind juggler, there was indeed a secret tunnel out of Purgatory. Beneath the rock marked with the secret sign you find fresh armor and weapons...thus armed, you are ready to seek revenge for your imprisonment.

117) Here in the open garden you find an unusual statue. It is of an apparently wealthy man, if the quality of his garments is any clue. He is in poor shape, and appears to be afraid of something. The quality of the work is excellent, but the statue is very unflattering.

118) A massive mechanical brass automaton stands at silent attention in this chamber. It is a flawless piece of engineering, massive yet agile, and heavily armed and armored from head to toe. It would not do to run into this thing in a dark hallway.

119) This vault is filled with slumbering dwarves...but if they sleep, it is the sleep of the dead, for the dwarves have been turned to stone. The dwarves are frozen in all variety of poses—sleeping, eating, working, and just a few while fighting. It seems the dwarves were surprised by something terrible that turned them to stone.

120) The Dragon Queen recoils when you show the DragonGem. "Curse you!" she hisses. "The DragonGem marks you as friend of dragons, and binds me to your will." The Dragon Queen looms above you, seeming impossibly large. "I grant you your life, and I dismiss you from my presence. When next you use the DragonGem, I will respond...but the sacrifice you offer must be sweet, or I will turn on you, and the DragonGem be damned!!"

With a beat of her wings the Dragon Queen is gone.

121) Peals of hysterical laughter assail your ears. You've discovered the secret undercity of Lansk, and where the city above is staid and conservative, this place is a true party town. Citizens stagger about in drunken stupors, angry soldiers wrestle with one another, women and animals run through the streets.

122) This statue represents Irkalla, the reigning deity of the Magan Underworld. It is to her you must appeal if you will long survive in the Underworld. She frequently wars with her consort Nergal, sometime King of the Underworld.

123) Here is a statue of Nergal, the cowardly King of the Underworld. When he is not getting along with Irkalla, Nergal is exiled to his palace in the Necropolis, a city of the dead hidden on one of Dilmun's many isles. Nergal is a bloated and ridiculous creature, but from the look in his eye you surmise he might have a sense of humor.

124) This statue honors the Universal God, the most popular deity of the surface realm of Oceana. The Universal God is a faceless deity with multiple arms and hands. Each hand is posed in a different signal, sending messages of hope and fear to the faithful. The Universal God is said to offer power to those who serve Freedom—it was a patron of the legendary Roba of Freeport. An ancient shrine to the Universal God on the mountain of Nisir attracts millions of pilgrims annually.

125) Here you find an image of Enkidu the beastman, patron deity of animals and Druids. His worship is strong in the wild places, but has declined in cities with the rise of Namtar and the destruction of the Druid sect.

126) Here you find Lansk's dragon, perhaps first glimpsed from the city square above. Up close the dragon is not nearly so impressive. It is an old dragon—its fire has gone out, and its teeth have been pulled. It is still a powerful beast, but age or drugs seem to have robbed the beast of its fighting spirit. The animal looks at you with something close to sadness in its eyes.

127) The cave is much larger on the inside than without. The interior of the cave is lined with thousands of natural crystals that crazily reflect the light. After your long dark journey through the Underworld, you are dazzled by the sudden light, and become disoriented.

A voice rings in your ears. "You are the heroes of Oceana, and to you has fallen the burden of this adventure. Listen closely, for this is what you must do...

"The fair world of Oceana is sinking as the seas swell ever larger—there is little to be done for this. The world has its span of life like any man or beast. The pilgrim Isles of Dilmun have been usurped by Namtar, a renegade demon from the realm of this Underworld. He has disposed of King Drake of Kingshome and rules in the late King's name, using the King's legions to pursue his path of conquest.

"Namtar must be destroyed. He has isolated his enemies, dispersed the magical brotherhood of the world and taken control of the dragons.

"The Sword of Freedom must be found and reborn in its forge. A reconciliation of sorts must be set between Irkalla and Nergal, for without accord in the Underworld, there can be no peace on the surface. When all is ready, seek the Mountain of Salvation—Namtar must be returned to the pit of hell from which he came."

The voice fades...

128) You sprinkle the ashes on the dark waters of the well, which abruptly begin to swirl. Although the night of the Underworld is absolute, you think you see a reflection of stars in the swirling black waters. The motion of the water intensifies and the ashes are sucked into the depths.

You stand back as a ghostly apparition rises from the well. At first the form is a shade, then a ghost, then a spectre, then a living corpse. Gradually the shape takes corporeal form...blood, bone, muscle, teeth, hair is restored.

The ashes are restored to life!

129) The meeting of the Dilmun Underground is called to order. All those in attendance at the meeting are cloaked in dark robes, and although you recognize a few voices, no faces are visible.

130) Formerly the imperial court of King Drake, this hall retains none of the splendor of ages past. Where once hung brilliant tapestries, the walls are now bare. Empty pedestals mark where renowned sculptures formerly stood. Blocks of marble are missing in several places where materials have been removed to construct fortresses for Kingshome's campaign army. This is not the court of a king in residence.

131) This is a private bedchamber. A man wearing a simple robe lays on a divan. He seems neither old nor young. He has no distinguishing marks or characteristics...there is no evil air to him, his eyes do not piece to your soul, his brow has no spark of mad genius. He sits up lazily as you enter, swings his feet to the floor, walks across the room, and shakes your hand.

"I'm Namtar," he says. "I suppose you guessed that. You've given me quite a lot of trouble." Namtar smiles. "Disappointed? Expecting something more? Later—I promise you. Won't you sit down?" Namtar offers you a chair.

Namtar looks sleepy. He keeps rubbing his eyes. "Administering the conquest of the world is a bitch," he says. "If I'd know how much work this was going to take, I doubt I ever would have started. Or maybe I never had a choice. No matter. We need to talk.

"I am the son of gods. It is my destiny to rule men such as yourselves. You don't have to like it—I sense you do not—but that is the way of things. I have some grand plans, but I can't begin until this futile resistance is quelled. It's just a matter of time. You know that as well as I. Why don't you pack it off to the Isle of the Damned—it worked for old Drake. You're not even native to Dilmun...there's little reason for you to oppose me. Granted, that episode in Purgatory was nasty, but into everyone's life a little reign must fall. Ha ha. That was a pun."

No one laughs. Namtar sighs. "Ah well, I suppose we'll have to do this the hard way. I'll be leaving now. If you're very dedicated, and very lucky, we may meet again within the Mountain of Salvation. I will kill you then. In the meantime, consider yourselves to be living on borrowed time. It's the least I can give you in gratitude for the entertainment you've provided thus far.

"Oh...by the way. You can move again." Namtar's sorcery was so complete, you did not notice you were under his compulsion until he brought it up. "I wish you the worst of luck, my friends." Suddenly Namtar is gone — no flash of light, no peal of thunder — just gone.

132) Aradrax screams as the first pint of blood is pumped from his body. This is going to be a long night—a single pint will never satisfy the Vampire Lord, but it seems none of the blood is going to come easy. You check the machines and see they function as advertised, but it still seems your volunteer is experiencing needless pain.

133) "You're all right," the troll laughs, wiping the froth from his lips. "We have many other strange and wonderful customs of which you should partake. Meet me at the crossed oaks when the moon is full, and you will have your promised meeting with the king."

134) In the very heart of the valley you find the sacred hive of the Dragon Queen. The Queen sits atop a mountain of eggs, some of which hatch young saurians even as you watch. The Dragon Queen is colossal—easily ten times the size of any beast you've confronted thus far. She fixes you with a fierce glare.

"You carve your way through my valley," she hisses, "destroying my creatures, and now enter the presence of the Mother Dragon. You will die for what you have done, but you will die slowly...as food for my brood."

The Dragon Queen rears up and prepares to breathe a blast of poisonous fire.

135) "I trust you have read Poe," Namtar laughs. "The best place to hide something is in plain sight. You paranoid dolts would never consider that, would you?" Namtar slides another rod into his arcane box. "Soon my work will be complete...soon I will fulfill my destiny—and then you will rue the day you laughed at me!!"

136) The galleries are crammed with fools, each exiled here for their inability to follow directions. The fantasy is only so real as you allow it to be, and while at times life may seem a fool's errand, it is only what you make of it. There is little sense in cheating yourself at solitaire.

137) Bound in chains upon this lonely Isle of Woe you find the dark queen Irkalla, Mistress of Magan. The chains are made of enchanted silver, and she is unable to move. "Topsiders!" she snarls when she sees you. "It's always the same. The water level rises, your toilets back up, and everyone rushes to the Underworld for help! Well, I have problems of my own, as you can see. That filthy halfbreed Namtar chained me here, and gave the key to the one creature who owes me no favors."

Irkalla regards you. "Perhaps you could be of some use," she says, her tone suddenly becoming incredibly seductive. "Find the Silver Key and set me free...you will be richly rewarded. Namtar is our mutual enemy. Serve me, and I shall serve you to defeat him!"

138) You stand at the edge of the Isle of Woe, looking out across the dark waters, and are convinced nothing is going to happen when a sudden flight of bats overhead heralds the arrival of momentous events. An ominous ringing fills the air. A few yards offshore the dark waters part, and offered up from the depths you see the legendary Sword of Freedom. Forged from dwarven steel in the fires of hell, powered by the essence of the legendary hero Roba, and tempered in the Apsu waters that underlie creation, the most powerful artifact Oceana has ever known has been reborn!

139) The dwarf has the engine running in no time. With a shudder and a cough, the ancient airship lumbers aloft, and for the first time in centuries something other than a dragon plies the airways of Oceana.

After several days journey to the west, you spot an uncharted island. At the center of the island is an odd ring of standing stones, and in the center of the ring you see...

140) You are up to see the dawn as the sun's rays brilliantly spread across the waters of Oceana. Nights on the trail have their own sort of beauty, but you can't hope helping it won't always be like this. Someday you will no longer be an outlaw. Someday you will sleep beneath a roof like other people, and at last be considered a true citizen of Dilmun. You won't always be poor—this is just a phase.

141) In the next chamber, you see fires identical to the first. "Very good," the voice intones. "You have potential, but I detected a flaw in your form. Please negotiate this wall of fire for me, that I might study your finer points."

142) "Now you are learning. Not everything is as it seems," says the voice. You enter a chamber occupied by a stone gargoyle. The gargoyle's gaze is fixed on the door through which you must exit the room. "To be seen by the gargoyle is to know death," says the voice. "Yet the gargoyle sees the exit. What to do, what to do...?"

143) "Now you have learned to listen. Excellent...you are half-way home," says the voice. You detect genuine admiration in its tone. "This college exists in the rarified atmosphere of the true academic, but not everyone you will encounter appreciates the Art. You must learn to deal with such ruffians." Out of thin air, a huge warrior appears, wielding a sword in both hands. "I'm gonna split yer lobe, highbrow!" he snarls.

144) "I'm sorry that was so brutal, but I had to prove a point," the voice explains. "Some people can't appreciate Art...in such times, you must rely on more direct measures." You find yourself in a chamber over which is suspended a huge block of granite. The block is hung by a cable...the cable trails to a wall and down to the floor, where it stretches across the floor as a trip-wire. It doesn't take much intelligence to figure it would be unhealthful to trip on the wire. The voice is strangely silent.

145) "That was novel. I don't think I've seen that solution before." Across the room you see your mysterious host. "I am Utnapishtim, also called the Faraway. I have been your teacher, now you must teach me something. I want to see something novel and new. Give me your best shot...you go first." The wizard waits for you to act.

146) This time it is Utnapishtim in the flesh who greets you. "Well done!" he says. "Having learned to listen to me, you've learned you don't have to listen to me. Lanac'toor could not have done better." The old wizard shows no concern when you tell him Lanac'toor is dead. "There's death, and then there's death. I wouldn't worry about Toor."

Utnapishtim shows you to a cabinet, within which are three magic items. "For completing my gauntlet, you may select one item. I offer the Soul Bowl, the Laugh Staff, or the Sing Ring. Which will it be, my friends?" The wizard looks at you with a hint of impatience. From the way he introduced the items, you judge he does not want you to select the Soul Bowl.

147) You emerge from a narrow pass and look out on a hidden valley. The valley is narrow and wet and confined on three sides by mountains and by the sea on the fourth. The swampy mass of the valley floor at first appears to be moving...until you look closer, when you realize the valley floor is covered with a mass of living creatures, crawling one atop another as far as the eye can see.

To venture into the Dragon Valley is to invite certain death.

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BILL HEINEMAN

Imagine my surprise when my boss told me I had to create a top-notch fantasy role-playing game in four months and four disk sides. Much to his dismay, it took a little more time than anyone thought but with the talents of everyone involved, we were able to create a new gaming experience for you to enjoy. My thanks to Paul O'Connor for his excellent game design, Todd Camasta for his artistic touches, and to Brian Fargo for putting up with me.

Now about that vacation...

From the left: Paul O'Connor, Bill Heineman, Todd J. Camasta